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Bossa Nova & Latin Jazz

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The article investigates the phenomenon of Bossa Nova, its most relevant aesthetic traces and the social environment of its creators and supporters, emphasizing its relationships with notions of modernity and tradition. In this sense, it analyses the interactions and translations Bossa Nova has had throughout its circulation.

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Bossa nova is a musical genre that emerged in Rio de Janeiro at the end of the 1950s which proposed a modernizing reappraisal of the traditional samba genre, whilst assimilating aesthetic information from American and Western European popular and art music traditions. It had its greatest impact in Brazilian

culture between 1959 and 1962, however its reach grew throughout the 1960s, both inside Brazil and abroad.

Bossa nova was perhaps the most striking music event to take place in the Brazilian cultural scene of the second half of the twentieth century. One which would have a long lasting impact in the field of Brazilian popular music. Its presence can be seen in a considerable number of cultural productions of the period, whose penetration went beyond Brazilian boundaries, spreading into various other countries and providing a novel flow of cultural exchanges between the Americas and Europe. In songs, shows, books, films, bossa nova's international success - notwithstanding translation processes and assimilation by a wide variety of interlocutors - managed to project a view of Brazil, its music and its culture to the world. On the other hand, bossa nova, as a commodity also impacted the international cultural markets, in particular the music market, contributing to the demarcation of hybrid spaces in the field of jazz and pop music.

This essay will attempt to align a possible reading of the bossa nova "phenomenon," considering its characteristics and initial perspectives, as an aesthetic project for popular Brazilian music, while evaluating the developments it achieved through its international associations and interactions.

Bossa Nova in Brazil: Antecedents, Agents, Mediators, and Spaces

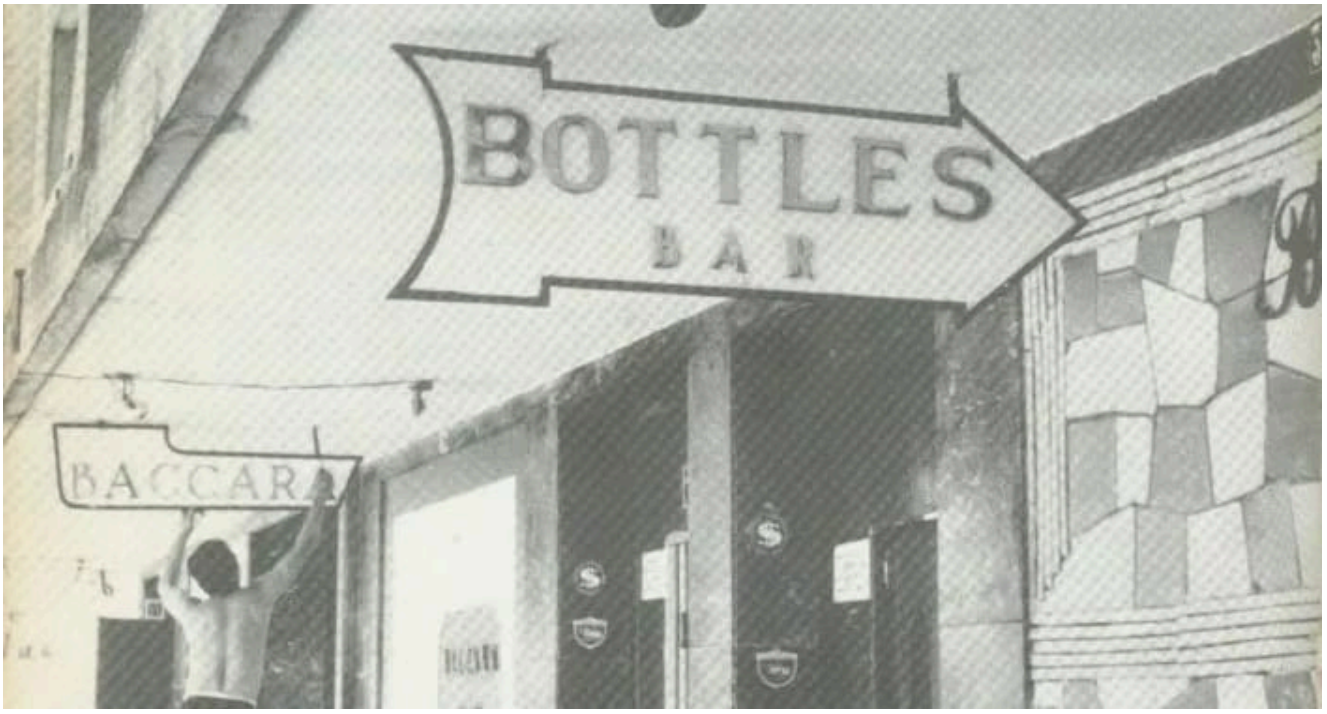
It is possible to perceive signs of the gestation process of the bossa nova project in the 1940s and 1950s in the relative opening of the Brazilian market to the importing of music genres, such as bolero (in its Cuban binary variant), mambo, and jazz, as well as the emergence of local regional productions such as *baião*, *côco*, *xaxado* and the *moda caipira*. Through radio programs, records and in the cinema, the new genres impacted the Brazilian music scenario, which since the 1930s had been dominated by samba.

As part of this process, the genre of *samba canção* would be configured as an important reference for the segments of the urban middle class, projecting the yearnings of artists and audiences for a popular music with a modernized appearance. Taking part in this process, as a field of experimentation and hybridism, *samba canção* produced works that would become emblematic, considered by various analysts as evidence of the construction process of the bossa nova aesthetic. Among the *sambasperformed by Dick Farney. [1] Also important were instrumental works

Taken together, the most evident characteristics of these recordings reveal a desire to match the standard of sound of international popular music at the time. Nevertheless, the thematic universe based on failed amorous relationships, with an instrumental/vocal apparatus whose intensity and passion were considered then as exaggerated, reveals certain limits of the genre as a field for innovation towards modernized song. The construction of what would be recognized as the bossa nova aesthetic still needed the complete elimination of these passionate outbursts and the formulation of new rhythmic paradigms in search for a sound synthesis of the local (samba) and foreign (jazz, bolero) traditions, as well as a radical timbric cleanliness in instrumentation. This would be the qualitative leap brought by the intervention of some artists who would determine the bossa nova norms, establishing themselves as its artificers.

The complex paths which resulted in the rise of bossa nova in the Brazilian cultural scenario at the end of the 1950s are the result of the confluence of various factors: the restructuring of live music venues in the principal capitals, the strengthening of the foundations of the local phonographic industry and the consequent segmentation of the scenario in specific consumption niches and finally, the confluence of

interests among publics, artists, recording studios, broadcasters, producers, and journalists. The closing of casinos in 1946 restructured habits of coexistence and it was in the circuit of bars, nightclubs, and restaurants in the Cariocas neighborhoods of Copacabana and Ipanema, where artists, songs, and new aesthetic perspectives began to circulate. In these spaces the demand for dance music was met by artists used to play a wide repertoire of proposals, sometimes including performance of jazz classics in chamber formations with piano, drums, double bass, wind instruments, etc. These music venues, also found in the central region of the city of São Paulo in the period, became the main meeting points for local and foreign musicians, as well as music critics and intellectuals to share their experiences. Various artists relevant to the rise of bossa nova performed on the stages of nightclubs and bars of the period, such as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Baden Powell, Johnny Alf, João Donato, Sergio Mendes, Luis Carlos Vinhas, Luiz Eça, J. T. Meirelles, Maysa, Nora Ney, Hélcio Milito, Milton Banana, and Dom Um Romão, amongst others.



Beco das Garrafas (Rio de Janeiro)

Source: Diário do Rio



Beco das Garrafas (Rio de Janeiro)

Source: Diário de Rio

Exchanges between musicians from different countries who had visited Brazil since the beginning of the 1950s were fundamental in attracting interest regarding possibilities of insertion in the universe of the works and premises of samba and bossa nova, amongst other popular genres. The memory of these contacts is highlighted by various analysts and columnists and was an important stage in the cultural exchanges that would occur with the massive circulation of bossa nova abroad in recorded formats. Several foreign artists came to the country on tours and performances during the period: Tommy Dorsey in 1951, visiting the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Recife and his *big band* [2]; Dizzy Gillespie in 1956, with presentations of his band in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro [3]; Louis Armstrong in 1957, with concerts in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Moreover, other representatives of jazz also visited the country in this period: Woody Herman in 1958; Nat King Cole in 1959; Cab Calloway in 1959; Sarah Vaughan in 1959; Ella Fitzgerald in 1960; Benny Goodman in 1961. Another large event which brought US musicians to Brazil was the *American Jazz Festival*, a *tour* of jazz musicians in 1961 including Coleman Hawkins, Zoot Sims, Roy Eldridge, Sonny Stitt, and Jo Jones with concerts in the Municipal Theater and other spaces in Rio de Janeiro. [4]

In addition to performances in nightclubs, theaters, the radio, and television, the pinnacle of any aspiring musician was to enter the phonographic market with records, initially at 78 rpm and later in the more valued *Long Play* format at 33 rpm. Here an important agent was the producer and composer Aloysio de Oliveira (1914-1995), who in the period 1956-1960 was the artistic director of Odeon records. In that context, the existence of a more professionalized group of artists with some experience and power within the musical field can be perceived: Tom Jobim, Newton Mendonça, Sylvia Telles, João Gilberto, Sérgio Ricardo, Dick Farney, Lucio Alves, Elza Soares, Rosana Toledo, and Trio Irakitan. In addition to these, other names from a younger age group and with less or no professional experience with music came to figure as "postulants" and helped spread some of the aesthetic ideas of bossa nova, whether as composers, lyric writers, or instrumentalists: Ronaldo Bôscoli, Carlos Lyra, Roberto Menescal, Mario and Oscar Castro

Neves, Chico Feitosa, Luis Eça and Luiz Carlos Vinhas. The connecting point between these groups of artists was the growing contact all had - to some degree - with the Bahian guitarist and performer João Gilberto (1931-2019).

Bossa nova songs and their stylistic characteristics
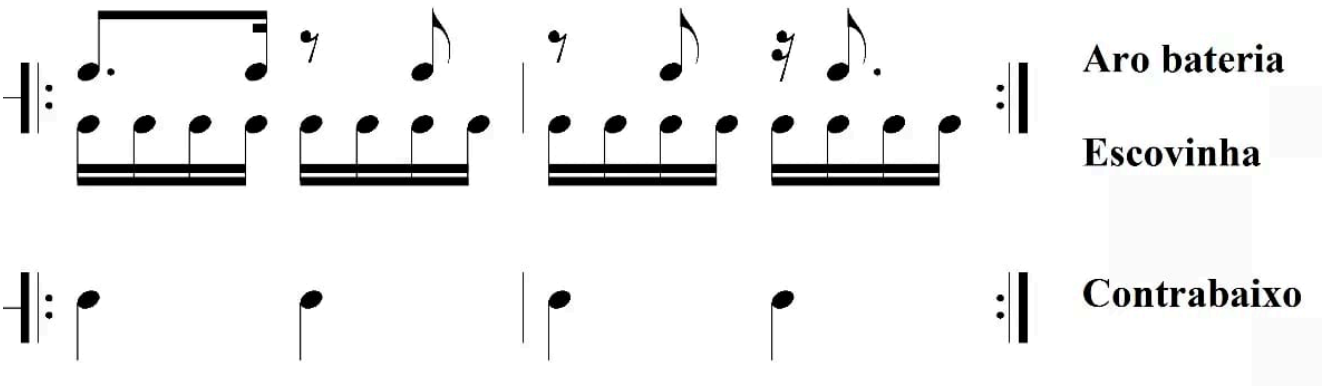
As a master plan for cultural intervention, bossa nova was conceived as a *utopian project*, since it showed the desire of the Carioca middle class to reconcile their values of sophistication and modernity - and its corollaries: industrialization and urbanization - with a state of equilibrium between the human being and nature. In this sense it translated the yearnings of part of Brazilian society responsible for the production of the sufficiently long-lasting imaginary about Brazilianness, tradition in music, and the perspectives regarding the integration of the country in international capitalism.

Artists and performers fed on these yearnings, even admitting a variety of stylistic perspectives in the authorial propositions of its principal artificers, in particular in their song interface. The utopia of this project essentially resides in the proposition of a new *ethos* for popular music, in which the states of conflict between the subject and object, sender and receiver, between the poetic self, its interlocutor(s), and/or the environment which surrounds it are potentially resolved by (and in) the formal and interpretative structure of the work.

In the bossa nova aesthetic project lyrics, melody, harmony, rhythm, and performance went through a critical revision of their function in the poetic whole, coming to be seen (and heard) as an integrated unity. This perspective also redefined the role of performance and arrangements, simultaneously giving bossa nova the character of a musical genre which produced original and emblematic works, but also an interpretative style capable of introducing a radical revision of the samba tradition. Therefore, rather than just a rupture, bossa nova also sought to insert itself as part of Brazil's popular musical tradition.

It was through the re-reading of the rhythmical tradition of samba and other foreign traditions such as bolero and jazz that bossa nova forged its most celebrated feature. With the intervention of João Gilberto the tendency for more clean instrumental formations and synthesis was radicalized, especially in the new role assumed by the guitar in the general context of arrangements. The famous "beat" introduced by João Gilberto and unanimously taken as an emblem of the new aesthetic wasplucked by the indicator, middle, and ring fingers of the guitarist's right hand, in a rhythmic counterpoint to the notes played by the thumb. These patterns synthesize a re-reading of the African timelines tradition present in the percussion of samba together with the irregular marking of the bass in jazz, providing the rhythmic base characteristic of the bossa nova style. The guitar thus assumed two complementary functions: one rhythmic and percussive, the other of harmonic support; a perspective widely adopted by the contemporaries of João Gilberto, such as Baden Powell (1937-2000), Luiz Bonfá (1922-2001), and Roberto Menescal (b. 1937).

Also important was the reformulation of the percussion and the inclusion of drums, as evidence of the elimination of instrumental apparatus more linked to traditional samba or *samba batucado*. This approach can be seen, for example, in the work of Edison Machado (1934-1990) and Miltoné Samba Novo* (CBS, 1959), later being adopted by other drummers of the period, such as: Dom Um Romão, Dirceu Medeiros, Wilson das Neves, and Rubens Barsotti. According to this perspective, the conduction of the drums passes through the gradual elimination of percussion instrumentson the cymbals and with the drumstick on the rim of the drum shell, susceptible to variations around the same base:



General perspective of the drums. Key: Drum shell rim, Drum brush.

Source: Fabio Poletto

Through this synthesis, the arrangements of bossa nova do without the sonorities of percussion (especially the *surdo* drum, the tambourine, and the *agogô*), constituting a texture which excels in the minimalism of its interventions, in constant tension with the syncopated rhythm of the guitar and the vocal emission. This is the perspective perceived in the recordings of the three initial albums of João Gilberto (*Chega de Saudade*, Odeon, 1959; *O amor, o sorriso e a flor*, Odeon, 1960; *Joãorhythm support is reduced to the guitar, piano, and the drum shell. [5] However, this perspective would be modified when bossa nova circulatedthe percussive ensemble, [6] shifting the importance of the guitar as a rhythmic articulator. Simultaneously, the greater emphasis on the percussive ensemble and its timbres reveal the importance conferred on the stereotyped notion of Latin/o more suited to the international audiences being aimed at.

In addition to establishing a new rhythmic paradigm, the bossa nova aesthetic also reorganized other vectors of compositions. In this process Tom Jobim's work gained a certain protagonism, since some of the compositional strategies he used acquired the status of models to be copied. An important influence on his style is the pianistic literature of the nineteenth century, notably Frederic Chopin and Claude Debussy, as well as the Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos. His harmonic constructions follow a general pattern of the densification of morphological structures, with the adding of tensions to the chords, chromatic conduction of internal voices, the use of modal mixture, insertion of modal passages within tonal contexts, amongst other solutions. Another of characteristic of Jobim's resources is the preparation of highly syncopated and recurrent melodic motives which are updated in processes of derivation, repetition and/or transposition according to each new harmonic context introduced in the development of works. These features are directly related to the poetic content in which, in general: a) a state of conflict between the sender-receiver is presented, generally with the use of dissonances; b) a sudden or unexpected alteration of the harmonic path, through the use of modulations, updates the state of conflict, transforming it into conciliation.

Examples

Chega de Saudade/No More Blues (Tom Jobim/Vinícius de Moraes, 1958):leaps and the recurrent syncopation of its attacks ("*vai minha tristeza/go away my sadness*"), is revisited at various moments of the work: *"chega de saudade/enough longing;" "diz-lhe numa prece/pray to her;" "não há beleza é só tristeza/there is no beauty, it is only sadness,*" in general denoting the state of sadness by the separation between the sender and the receiver in the song. Starting in the second*"mas se ela voltar/but if she*

returns," "*dentro dos meus braços/in my arms*." At this moment, the profile adapted to the new harmonic context together with the progressive assertiveness of the lyrics indicate the possibility of conciliation and happiness.

characterized by various dissonant melodic leaps and recurrent syncopation: *"se você disser que eu desafino amor/if you say that I am off key, my love"; "saiba que isso em mim provoca imensa dor/know that this in me provokes an immense pain;" "eu possuo apenas o que Deus me deu/I have only what God gave me;" "se você insistir em classificar/if you insist in classifying;" "meu comportamento de anti-musical/my anti-musical behavior."*

In the first section, the interactions between the dissonant leaps in the melody with the harmonic path dramatize and make more potential the state of conflict and the incompatibility between the sender andthis is very natural,"* the profile of the motif is slightly altered, *"o que você não sabe nem sequer pressente/what you do not know nor even foresee,"* revealing an opening to conciliation, since *"no peito dos desafinados também bate um coração/in the breast of those off key also beats a heart."* In this song, developed in the form of an intimate dialogue, a musical aspect (being out of tune) is transformed into the motto to present some of the premises of the bossa nova aesthetic, exploited in a metalinguistic form.

Samba de uma nota só/One Note Samba (Tom Jobim/Newton Mendonça, 1959)*:* the principal motif in the first section, syncopated in itssambinha, feito numa nota só/Here is this sambinha, made from a single note*"), which is repeated in *"outras notas vão entrar, mas a base é uma só/other notes will enter, but the base is just one"* and isconsequencia*/*this other one is a consequence,*" and again isminha nota/and I came back to my note.*" In the second section, in which the poetic self again presents more reasons to use just one note as theuse of the entire major scale, mirrored by the verses: *"tanta gente existe por aí que fala tanto e não diz nada, ou quase nada/so many people exist around here who speak a lot and say nothing, or almost nothing,"* or *"já me utilizei de toda a escala e no final não deu em nada/I have used the entire scale and at the end it came to nothing."*

Garota de Ipanema/The Girl from Ipanema (Tom Jobim/Vinícius de Moraes, 1963)*:* the melodic motif *"Olha que coisa mais linda/*look, what ainterval (*"tão cheia de graça/so full of grace"*) transposed to new harmonic contexts: "*que vem e que passa/that comes and goes*." Thetransposed upwards, now as the emblem of the growing of the increasing perception of the poetic self in relation to the distance which separates him from the object of his desire: *"ah, por quê estou tão sozinho/ah, because I am so alone."*

This conception is also expressed in other works, such as: *Fotografia/Photograph* (Tom Jobim, 1959), *Corcovado* (Tom Jobim, 1960), *Insensatez/How Insensitive* (Tom Jobim/Vinícius de Moraes, 1961), *Samba da Benção* (1962, Baden Powell/Vinícius de Moraes), *Samba de Verão/Summer Samba* (1964, Marcos Valle), *O Barquinho/Little Boat* (1961, Roberto Menescal/Ronaldo Bôscoli), and *Manhã de Carnaval/Black Orpheus* (1959, Luiz Bonfá/Antonio Maria).

In turn, the lyrics reveal a new "poetic economy," with the valorization of the coastal landscape and the incorporation of the prosaic daily routine into the songs, a preference for short texts and an economy of words, centered in verbs and nouns (e.g. *Outra Vez*, Jobim). Not only the expressive content is valorized, but also the individual sonority of the words, opening the way for humor, nonsense, irony, and metalanguage. In this process the intervention of the poet and (the then) diplomat Vinícius de Moraes (1913-1980) signified the incorporation of new literary pretensions and poetics in the song lyrics, with the gradual replacement of the passional register by a lyrical one in dealing with amorous relations.

These perspectives came together in the performance of João Gilberto, who became paradigmatic by avoiding great contrasts of intensity, *fermatas* or *sforzandos* in high notes, with his singing being guided by a search for subtlety in a perspective close to that of spoken language. The set of formal and constructive characteristics of his singing is related to the general pattern of expressive restraint, which finds a correlation in the vocal interpretation.

In summary: while bossa nova's themes were centered on amorous relations, the treatment given to them sought a certain distancing from dramatic and passionate matrices. These were perceived as symptoms of a Latin/o sensibility considered outdated in the middle of the desires of that community of artists and its audience(s) for greater cosmopolitism and sophistication. Achieving this expressive restraint was obtained by a combination of compositional and performative actions which tended to express a certain conscience of various layers of meaning exposed by the interaction between melody, harmony, rhythm, and the sung word. In this sense, by conscientiously and creatively speculating with the fundamental elements of song, bossa nova earned its reputation as the inaugural genre of modernity in the field of popular music in Brazil.

Support and circulation

Bossa nova initially became known as a type of emerging vanguard, restricted to performances in the apartments of its aficionados and concerts in university halls and the nightlife of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. From these spaces it gradually expanded its field of reverberation to programs on the nascent - and still exclusive - television, segments of radio programs, musical soundtracks in cinematographic productions, phonographic formats (78 rpm and LPs), spreading to advertising.

In 1959-1960 bossa nova concerts were organized in the markedly university spaces of schools of architecture, law, and philosophy, then restricted to middle class youth. Images from one of these events reveal the intimist aspect of the performances, with the audience accommodated on the ground, on sofas, and armchairs. They thus functioned as events to promote the style among the audience aimed at and also as a prospective strategy for new artists for the agents of the record industry. Not by chance, Aloysio de Oliveira, artistic director of Odeon, and André Midani, future general director of the Brazilian branch of the multinational Philips, frequented these events.



1st Samba Session Festival - School of Architecture, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 22/09/1959

Source: Rio



O Encontro (agosto, 1962). The principal names of bossa nova in an informal encounter which signified a moment of a greater projection of the style in Brazil until that moment.

Source: Bon Gourmet



Show O Encontro (agosto, 1962)

Source: Jobim



Television program with João Gilberto. Revista do Rádio, issue 556, 1960, n/p. Television was another socially valorized space to disseminate bossa nova in the period, especially among high income publics, at whom the program was initially aimed.

Source: Memoria

It was through the arrival of records that bossa nova became consolidated in the popular music scenario. It is practically consensual among artists and analysts that the LP *Chega de Saudade,* released by João Gilberto in 1959, became an inaugural landmark. The opportunity to record his first solo album was intermediated by Tom Jobim with Odeon, which also put considerable effort into commercially promoting the record.



João Gilberto

Source: Memoria

In this context, also important was the work of the Elenco label, founded by the producer Aloysio de Oliveira and which aimed to conquer the specific niche of *modern* music, strongly identified at that time with bossa nova. In its period of greatest activity, covering the years 1963-1966, Elenco released around 60 records, including the debut work of some of the principal names of bossa nova. The graphic design of the label's albums, in general under the responsibility of the photographer Francisco Pereira and the visual artist Cesar Gomes Villela (n. 1930), revealed a certain harmony with the musical style, with a clean layout predominating and stripped down information, restricted to the most basic: name of the composer/singer, name of the work, with drawings or photos in high contrast, evidencing the colors black, white, and red.



Cover of Elenco's debut LP: Vinícius de Moraes and Odette Lara.

Source: Pinterest



Cover of the Brazilian edition of Jobim's debut LP in the US.

Source: Pinterest

Cinema was an important means of circulation of bossa nova, and it was with a French-Italian production *Orfeu Negro* (1959, Dir. Marcel Camus) that Brazilian popular music as a whole gained international projection. The film allowed the dissemination of different Brazilian musical styles and genres abroad, both in Europe and the US, with bossa nova being one of its most privileged vectors. Another work which collaborated in this dissemination was the French/Italian/Brazilian production *Copacabana Palace* (1962, Dir. Stefano Vanzina), in which references to the international success of bossa nova are evident, including the participation of some of the most important Brazilian musicians linked to the style, such as Tom Jobim, João Gilberto, and Luiz Bonfá.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjfOATjCSgk

Copacabana Palace (1962).

Source: YouTube

Over time bossa nova was transformed into a term which attracted associations in the Brazilian cultural field as a whole, extrapolating the musical universe and spreading towards editorial design and advertising campaigns in various types of advertisements and products. In this sense it conveyed an unequivocal positivity, as an emblem of novelty, quality, and sophistication, in general linked to a public with high acquisitive power.

Examples of "bossa nova" products



Advertisement for Rainha "bossa nova" tennis shoes. "Rainha footwear is known for its quality and distinction." O Cruzeiro, 06/08/1960.

Source: Memoria



Brastemp "Príncipe Bossa Nova" Refrigerator.

Source: Muzeez



Bossa nova nail polish.

Source: Memoria

In this general framework some of the paths followed by bossa nova in the Brazilian cultural scenario during the 1959-1963 period can be perceived. Its dissemination expanded gradually in different medias, involving a variety of articles, not restricted to the musical vector. These strategies revealed the structural possibilities of the cultural goods market in the period, as well as its limits. After (and as a result of) it captured the position of the most prestigious artistic vector in the field of popular music, bossa nova came to circulate in an increasing manner, adding symbolic value to the goods which borrowed its seals, whether they were cultural or not. In this sense it was perhaps the first cultural movement to allow a relatively integrated action of the cultural industry in the country, a phenomenon which became more effective from the middle of the 1960s onwards.

Abroad

Outside Brazil the circulation of bossa nova became more complex, the result of the action of a considerable series of mediators, including musicians, producers, editors, the specialized critics, and the diplomatic service, amongst other agents. The ambitions and senses which bossa nova represented in the Brazilian context were gradually changing and acquiring new connotations as it crossed linguistic and geographic frontiers. In this process, bossa nova was transformed into an object of constant appropriations and hybridizations among the mediators which connected Brazil with European countries and the United States, constituting an international sphere of cultural exchanges whose flow expanded globally at the end of the twentieth century.

It is possible to map this phenomenon initially through the various musical tours of US artists in Brazil which during the 1950s constituted evidence of contacts and interactions between foreign and local musicians. The importance of official support was debated in the daily press and proposals for diplomatic action in the international diffusion of the music produced in the country became the object of actions of the Brazilian government. An initial landmark in the cultural diffusion policies can be seen in the ambiguous support for the international divulgation of the 1959 film *Orfeu Negro*.[7] With music being its principal theme and presenting songs such as *A felicidade* (Tom Jobim/Vinícius de Moraes) and *Manhã de Carnaval* (Luiz Bonfá/Antonio Maria) prominently in the plot, the film created opportunities for these songs to gain autonomous repercussion in relation to the musical soundtrack. Many French artists made renditions of *Manhã de Carnaval*, which revealed the commercial consecration of the song - via film - in France. In 1959 alone, Vanja Orico, Dalida, Maria Candido, John William, André Dassary, Tino Rossi, Marie José, and Gloria Lasso, amongst others released their own versions, with the title *Chanson d'Orphée* and lyrics translated into French.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBMxLZ2ReGU&list=PLNKS7Vh16nz9lgOOUucPyXaJ2A2wDVVrX&index=30

Chanson d'Orphée by Dalida

Source: YouTube

In these renditions new meanings were proposed aiming to meet the demands of local audiences: focus on the dramatic aspect of the melody, a new meaning given to the lyrics by the translation, an emphasis on the percussive ensemble which in general meant a Latin/o tinge, amongst others.

In the wake of this achievement, throughout the 1960s a market segment remained opened in France for Brazilian and Franco-Brazilian cinematography, becoming an important canal for circulation of music. Therefore, due to the commercial and critical success obtained by this production, Brazilian songs, films, and artists began to circulate at a global scale.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T1mN8_TIoQ

> *Orfeu Negro*: the actor Breno Mello (Orfeu) performs the song *Manhã de Carnaval*, dubbed by the Brazilian singer Agostinho dos Santos.
>
> **Source:** YouTube

The circulation of *Orfeu Negro* among US musicians was equally striking, particularly among instrumentalists linked to jazz, and was fundamental for some of them to come to Brazil to get more intimate contact with the music produced in the country. These meetings were crucial for the emergence of various albums dedicated to bossa nova, such as *Jazz Samba* by Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz. This included an instrumental version of *Desafinado* (Jobim/Mendonça), which reached no. 4 on the *Adult Contemporary Chart* in 1962 and no. 14 on the *Billboard Hot 100* in the same year. At the same time Stan Getz obtained a Grammy in the category "Best Jazz Performance - Soloist Or Small Group (Instrumental)" in 1962, for his interpretation of *Desafinado*. In thesaxophone, the syncopated rhythm of the guitar which characterized the style on Brazil lost importance, with this dimension being emphasized by the percussion-drums ensemble. This interpretation revealed the new meanings achieved by bossa nova in this new context, imposing a model for subsequent releases in the form of hybrid products, crossovers which explored the rhythmic exoticism of bossa nova and samba with the cultural capital of jazz. Symptomatically, much of the works released used to some extent the label *Jazz Samba*.

No less important was the concert held in November 1962 in Carnegie Hall, New York, which aimed to "present" the genre to the US and global audience. For this, efforts were made by Brazilian cultural diplomacy bodies, such as providing air tickets for the musicians to travel to New York, although the selection of participants was notable for some confusion and the lack of criteria. Reports of the event reveal the presence of musicians and US phonographic producers in the audience, a fact which is said to have motivated the initial establishment of some of the exponents of bossa nova in the US, such as Jobim, João Gilberto, Luiz Bonfá, Milton Banana, Sergio Mendes, and the Castro Neves brothers. Moreover, the radio transmission and recording of the concert, later released on record, were crucial for the dissemination of bossa nova around the country.



Bossa Nova "New Brazilian Jazz" concert in Carnegie Hall, 21/11/1962.

Source: Discogs

The Jazz scene constituted the first space for bossa nova's spreading through to the United States. Between 1962 and 1964 various well-known artists recorded and released commercially instrumental works in some way related to bossa nova: Dizzy Gilespie (1962), Stan Getz (1962, 1963, 1964), Cannonball Adderley (1962), George Shearing (1962), Zoot Sims (1962), Dave Brubeck (1962), Modern Jazz Quartet (1964), and Miles Davis (1963), amongst many others. In general, these albums reveal three different types of approximation:Brazilian songs in an instrumental format and with space for improvisations; [8] repertoire; [9]

The adaptation of bossa nova to the instrumental format also constituted evidence of the transformations suffered due to the international circulation process. In these versions, the sophisticated interaction between the poetic and melodic plan, characteristic of the original pretensions of the style in its song versions, no longer made sense for the new intended audiences.

The producer Creed Taylor (b. 1929) was one of the decisive agents for the success of bossa nova in the United States. His company *Verve Records* dominated the bossa nova album market and was responsible for the production and distribution of *Jazz Samba* (1962) with Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz; *Getz/Gilberto* (1964), *Getz/Gilberto #2* (1966), both with Stan Getz and João Gilberto, *Jazz Samba Encore* (1963) with Luiz Bonfá and Stan Getz, as well as Antonio Carlos Jobim's debut album in the US, *The Composer of Desafinado Plays* (1963). Deserving of particular attention here are the records *Jazz Samba* and *Getz/Gilberto,* with the latter winning three Grammys in 1964: "Album of the Year", "Best Instrumental Jazz Performance - Small Group Or Soloist With Small Group", "Best Engineered Recording - Non-Classical" for the engineer Phil Ramone, and "Record of The Year" for the recording

In its release of bossa nova albums, *Verve Records* sought to consolidate the prestige of the style, revealing special care in the preparation of covers, the inclusion of critical texts on the record sleeves, etc. The album covers: *Jazz Samba*, *Big Band Bossa Nova*, *Jazz Samba Encore*, *Getz/Gilberto* and *Getz/Gilberto #2*, for example, had paintings by the Porto Rican painter Olga Albizu (1924-2005). Incorporated in the graphic project of the records was an abstract-expressionist style of an avant-garde nature which probably contributed to the aura of artistic exclusivity linked to the albums in the eyes of potential purchasers.



Cover of *Jazz Samba* (1962)

Source: Discogs



Cover of *Getz/Gilberto* (1963)

Source: Discogs

Nevertheless, the process of the adaptation and translation of bossa nova to the jazz instrumental ambient ran into difficulties with foreign musicians, especially with the rhythmic aspect. While the formal constitution and the harmonic language of some bossa nova themes had similarities with the same parameters in jazz, the same could not be affirmed of other paradigms, which became the objective of more varied attempts at assimilation, not always successful. Evidence of this difficulty can be observed in the conversation/rehearsal between Tom Jobim and Gerry Mulligan (1927-1996):

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dbL4PcVEdI&t=19s

Jobim explains the rhythm of the melody of *Samba de uma nota só* to Gerry Mulligan

Source: YouTube

The general tendency in these recordings was of a relatively standardized assimilation of drum patterns which were used in a much less rigid form by Brazilian musicians. Once assimilated they became types of *topos* of bossa nova music in international markets and

Example 1. Son clave (order of rhythmic cells 3-2)



Example 2. Typical rhythmic pattern in bossa nova



Rhythmic matrices (*Claves*) of Son (Cuba) and Bossa Nova (Brazil).

Source: Gevers, Jeroen. "Reinterpreting Bossa Nova: Instances of Translation of Bossa Nova in the United States, 1962-1974". Dissertação de Mestrado, Utrecht, 2010, p. 32.

These difficulties, linked to the need of labels to guarantee some credibility in these records, created a demand for Brazilian artists. The meeting between Sacha Distel and Dionne Warwick for French television constituted evidence of this phenomenon. In this Distel "presented" bossa nova to Warwick, taking care to indicate "his" guitarist, the Brazilian Baden Powell.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsPJP_vJ2H4&list=PLNKS7Vh16nz9lgOOUucPyXaJ2A2wDVVrX&index=5

Baden Powell, Sacha Distel, and Dione Warwick play La fille d'Ipanema for French television.

Source: YouTube

During the 1960s and 1970s various Brazilian musicians made careers in the US and European market, acting as instrumentalists, singers, composers, and/or arrangers. The list includes Luiz Bonfá, João Gilberto, João Donato, Baden Powell, Sérgio Mendes, Airto Moreira, Milton Banana, Dom Um Romão, Flora Purim, Moacir Santos, Astrud Gilberto, Eumir Deodato, Laurindo de Almeida, Walter Wanderley, and Oscar Castro-Neves, amongst others.

The US jazz scene was, therefore, to a great extent responsible for spread of bossa nova at a global level and, in addition, for the aura of prestige initially achieved by the style in other countries. Notwithstanding the presence of Brazilian songs in *Orfeu Negro*, the influence of the American scene in France was such that many French discovered bossa nova in the recording or concerts of US jazzmen. Here, Michel Legrand (1932-2019) became an important mediator when he started a partnership with the guitarist Baden Powell, an essential factor for establishing the latter's career in Paris, where he found a growing public and critical acceptance.

However, the penetration of bossa nova as a segment in the jazz field was not exempt from conflicts, negotiations, and contradictions. By interfering in a relatively autonomous field with its own spheres of assessment and consecration, bossa nova was the object of critical reflections and assessments by part of

the specialized critics. A vehicle with particular importance was *Down Beat* magazine, which between 1962 and 1969 published reviews of around 184 albums released in the US with some connection to bossa nova. The specialized criticism in jazz, thus, exercised a fundamental role in trying to discipline the reception, as well as to organize narratives about what bossa nova was, its origins, and its possibilities of belonging to the field of jazz.

These efforts reveal ambiguities and subtleties in the dynamics of the circulation of bossa nova since it differed from the models of *Latin/o music* recognized until then in jazz. In this sense the general direction of Tom Jobim's debut album *The Composer of Desafinado Plays* (Verve, 1963), highly regarded and seen as an example of "authenticity" by the specialized critics, constitute evidence of this phenomenon.general concern in building controlled sound dynamics, without *sforzandos* or *crescendos*, characteristic of a poetics of emotional restraint, without great contrasts of intensity and timbre. However, these directions brought problems with classification and the evaluation of the potentials and limits of the bossa nova "Latinidad". It had a sound proposal which differed from the *hot sound* known and expected in proposals of fusions between jazz and Latin/o music, blurring these assumptions. Symptomatically, the most enthusiastic welcome for bossa nova was among musicians who practiced the *Cool Jazz* style, although the range of sound results of these interactions was complex and varied.

The perception of these differences allowed bossa nova to open a distinct segment in the field of jazz, expanding it - not without tensions - beyond the Cuban matrices then dominant and established, with works that gradually acquired the status of *standards*. The creation of *Real Book* in 1974, a fundamental collection in the formation process of the new canon for jazz in the period, is revealing: of the 435 compositions in its first edition the book included 20 titles with the label "bossa". Other evidence of this incorporation is the frequency with which terms such as *bossa feel* and/or *bossa rhythm* begin to appear in collections and songbooks published after that and aimed at underpinning the interpretative practices of non-native musicians. Finally, it is important to note that terms such as *Cubop* or *Afro-Cuban*, predominant until the beginning of the 1960s and indicative of a certain sound geography gradually ceded spaces to the more wide-ranging term *Latin Jazz*.

Although important the appropriations of bossa nova were not restricted to the jazz scenario. The commercial success of the compositions *Desafinado* and *The Girl from Ipanema* motivated numerous agents from the US record industry to adopt aggressive marketing strategies in order to capitalize as much as possible on profits from the novelty. Numerous commercial releases were made of crossovers of bossa nova with pop music styles aimed at dance, especially in the *big band* instrumental format. As the musician and producer Quincy Jones said at the time: "Everybody got caught by surprise by the Twist and nobody wants to get left out if bossa nova gets big. So everybody's recording it". [10] Jones himself produced and commercially released his perspective of bossa nova, an album called *Big Band Bossa Nova,* one of the three released in 1962 with the same title. Even Elvis Presley included a dance version in his film Fun in Acapulco (1963, dir. Richard Thorpe), called *Bossa Nova Baby*.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GanoEE7VUc

> Elvis Presley, "Bossa Nova Baby", *Fun in Acapulco* (1963, dir. Richard Thorpe)
>
> **Source:** YouTube

In the view of commercial directors and executive of record labels, the attempts and experiments to create a bossa nova dance sought to make compatible a mix of "Latin/o" elements already established in the memory of the US public, such as *cha-cha-cha*, *mambo*, *pachanga,* and *samba*. The circulation of bossa nova there produced a gradual expansion of its initial proposals in the sense, for example, of attempts to consolidate a dance in the wake of the commercial success of *twist*. A significant phenomenon - and simultaneously ironic - since bossa nova had among its aesthetic premises the cooling of the dynamogenic appeal of samba. Some of the principal agents of this process were Fred Astaire Studios, the businessman and dancer Arthur Murray (1895-1991), and the actress and TV host Judy Garland (1922-1969), on whose shows one of these attempts was presented, to the sound of *Soul bossa nova,* a hit from Quincy Jones' LP.

The Grammy received by Joe Harnell in 1962 for *Fly Me To The Moon Bossa Nova,* in the "Best Performance By An Orchestra - For Dancing - Pop Music," is other evidence of this panorama. However, it can be seen that these attempts were also disseminated in other countries, such as Britain and France:

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w__mB-L1n3o

Latest in dancing, a British production showing the novelties in the world of dance in 1962, including bossa nova.

Source: YouTube

Another important stage in the penetration of bossa nova in the pop music universe occurred when the songs originally produced in Portuguese came to have English, French, or Italian versions of their lyrics. In this context, equally important mediators were the translators of song lyrics, such as the Americans Norman Gimbell, Ray Gilbert, and Gene Lees, translators of various of Tom Jobim's works to English, as well as the Frenchman Eddy Marnay, translator of various Brazilian songs to French. This movement was of crucial importance for the spreading of bossa nova in international markets, although the preparation of these translations had become primarily aimed at making the poetic content of the lyrics the most intelligible as possible to the new audiences. In this way the meaning of the aesthetic proposals inserted in the original bossa nova program, derived from the lyric-music interaction, were sometimes cleaved by other needs. However, while the translation processes implied some degree of the de-characterization of the original versions, it also engendered new problematics and connotations, making the circulation of bossa nova even more complex and rich outside of Brazil. For example, the English version of *Garota de Ipanema* is symptomatic of these meditations and negotiations, to the extent that it projected new meanings for the scene described in the song lyrics. The male look which admires the beauty and grace of Girl in the Portuguese lyrics is replaced by a female look which witnesses the scene, subtly assessing the male desire inscribed in it. At the same time, Astrud Gilberto's performance (Verve, 1964), embodies the Girl, potentializing gender issues and expanding the role of the feminine in the original cultural universe of bossa nova, marked by stereotypes of women's submission to male power.

The Girl from Ipanema became the great world hit of bossa nova, with versions in English, French, Italian, and Spanish, amongst others. The French version, entitled *La fille d'Ipanema*, was released, amongstMouskouri. In the following year *The Girl from Ipanema* became one of the most recorded and played songs in the history of Western popular music. Singers from other matrices also recorded bossa nova standards in Portuguese or in translations, such as Brigitte Bardot, who in 1964 released *Maria Ninguém* (Carlos Lyra), Pierre Barouh, who in 1971 released *Ce n'est que de l'eau* (*Água de Beber* Jobim/Vinicius deversions in French, Italian, and English.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuEv942wOZs&index=23&list=PLNKS7Vh16nz-Zp0DEDym0CvMJ6Kfic6Z_

Caterina Valente

Source: YouTube

Also of importance was the action of the American Andy Williams, whose television shows had various appearances of Tom Jobim, in 1965 and 1966, expanding his projection among the public of that country. The role of US and European artists was thus decisive for the progressive occupation of new spaces for bossa nova.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKfl15c-Kh0

Andy Williams' television shows had various appearances of Tom Jobim, in 1965 and 1966.

Source: YouTube

A similar process to what had occurred in Brazil began, although with a more vertical scope, considering the size of the American and European cultural market. In addition to t-shirts, stickers, and trinkets with the bossa nova "brand," there were attempts by artists not necessarily linked to the style to capitalize on these market possibilities, which(1928-2013) hit *Blame it on bossa nova* (1963). In both this and the French versions *Tout ça pour la bossa nova* with Richard Anthony(1936-1989), it is possible to see the reverberations of the international success of bossa nova.

An example of this movement of the expansion of bossa nova into the song realm abroad was the US trajectory of Tom Jobim. The positive reception of his debut work, of an instrumental nature, caused his transfer to Warner, a major label, where he released other albums with English versions of his songs. Finally, the LP *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim,* internationally released in 1967, can be seen as evidence of the international exposure and prestige of Jobim's bossa nova songs in the 1960s. In it, as well as classic American song standards, English versions were (re)recorded of: *The Girl from Ipanema* (Garota de Ipanema), *Dindi*, *Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars* (Corcovado), *Meditation* (Meditação), *If you never come to me* (Inútil Paisagem), *How Insensitive* (Insensatez), and *Once I loved* (Amor em paz). [11] The release of Sinatra and Jobim's record was marked by a series of publicity initiatives then established in the United States, marked by the verticality of the actions, including a television program, interviews, etc.

VIDEO

View online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPqjIAip1AI

Frank Sinatra and Antônio Carlos Jobim in “A man and his music”, a program produced by the American broadcaster NBC and presented to an estimated audience of 80 million viewers.

Source: YouTube

Jobim seemed to be aware of the commercial possibilities of the project, believing that "*it went to the hit parade. This represented a very large number of records sold. And the record is naturally exported to other countries, Japan and everywhere.*" [12] At the same time, this work can be seen as the affirmation of

an aesthetic paradigm and a canon of works, to the extent that the majority of songs recorded were essentially Jobim's greatest hits, now under the mediatic apparatus linked to Sinatra.

Nevertheless, the international circulation of bossa nova in the second half of the 1960s also gradually incorporated mixtures and appropriations with parameters and repertoires of international pop music, with the target being middle class adults, *Adult Contemporary*.1941), with his "bossa nova" rendition of *Fool on the Hill* (Lennon/McCartney) in 1968, or the solo trajectory of Astrud Gilberto (b. 1940) also revealing these incorporations, including the performances of pop and jazz standards. Moreover, bossa nova remained in evidence with the use of songs - in original versions or translations - as the soundtrack to international cinematographic productions such as *L'Homme de Rio* (1964, dir. P. da Broca), *The Deadly Affair* (1965, dir. Sidney Lumet), *The Gentle Rain* (1966, dir. B. Balaban), *Un Homme et Une Femme* (1966, dir. Claude Leloush), or *Casino Royale* (1967, dir. Val Guest). These productions contributed to the establishment of an imaginary of seduction hinted at the Latin/o tinge attached to the style, in conjunction with the mystique of international travel and the Jet Set.

In summary, these new mediations consolidated the progressive filtering of elements of bossa nova that had occurred since the beginning of its international circulation, at the same time that it galvanized a diffuse Latin/o identity associated with the style, giving it even greater commercial potential in the universe of World Music from the 1990s on. Moreover, one of its most perceptible aspects, the expressive restraint became an emblem of some commercial labels associated - often pejoratively - with bossa nova: *Ambient Music*, *Mood Music*, or *Easy Listening*.

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NOTES

1. Dick Farney, pseudonym of Farnésio Dutra (1921-1987).
2. *A Noite* (27/11/1951): 11, *A Noite* (29/11/1951): 6.
3. Héstia Barroso, "O Brasil conhecerá o Be-Bop (sic)," *A Noite* (11/07/1956): 4.
4. Anônimo, "Jazz pagou e toca hoje no Municipal," *Jornal do Brasil* (16/07/196): 1° Caderno, 9.
5. Extract from João Gilberto "Corcovado" (1960).
6. Extract from Quincy Jones, "Samba De Una Nota So" (1960).
7. Winner of the Palme d'Or (1959) and of the Golden Globe and the Oscar for Best foreign movie (1960).
8. Extract from Miles Davis, "Aos pes da cruz," *Quiet Nights* (1962).
9. Extract from George Shearing, "On Green Dolphin Street" (1962).
10. Gene Lees, quoted by K. E. Goldschmitt, *Bossa Mundo. Brazilian Music in Transnational Media Industries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 24.
11. The American songs that were part of the record were: *Change Partners* (Irving Berlin); *I Concentrate on You* (Cole Porter); *Baubles, Bangles & Beads* (Robert Wright/George Forrest).
12. Antônio Carlos Jobim, "Depoimento ao MIS-RJ," Série Depoimentos para a Posteridade, 25/08/1967.
13. Extract from Cannonbal Adderley, "Clouds" (1962).
14. Extract from "*The Girl from Ipanema*".