

## INFLUENCE, BRAZIL

Brazil is the largest Latin American country in size and population, and home to a vibrant popular music culture with a wide variety of styles, some of which have become popular abroad. Samba, Brazil's national cultural symbol, has been incorporated into jazz, popular, and world music in the United States.

Americans' exposure to samba began with movie soundtracks. Ary Barroso's composition "Aquarela do Brasil" ("Brazil") and "Tico Tico no Fubá" by Zequinha de Abreu were featured in Walt Disney's 1942 animated short "Saludos Amigos" (Greetings Friends). The film was commissioned by the United States Department of State to represent Latin American countries in a flattering light as part of President Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy," in order to promote economic and military alliances between the United States and Central and South America. The studios were themselves already interested in developing new audiences to make up for the interruptions to their European markets caused by World War II. Disney based a second movie on South American geography in 1944 entitled "The Three Caballeros", which included a segment on Brazil's state of Bahia.

Carmen Miranda (and her sister) participated in Disney's films. She was a samba sensation and Brazil's first female recording star before moving to the United States. Her successful Broadway debut in 1939 in the musical "Streets of Paris" led to a movie career, beginning with "Down Argentine Way." She went on to star in a string of films portraying a generic exotic Latin woman, mixing characteristics of Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, and became the highest paid woman in America in 1945. The 1959 French film *Orfeu Negro (Black Orpheus)* gave an international audience a more authentic taste of Brazilian music. The soundtrack, composed by Luiz Bonfá and Antônio Carlos Jobim, sold millions of copies, and "Manhã de Carnaval," "Samba de Orfeu" and "A Felicidade" were soon re-recorded by jazz musicians. Brazilian-style music has since continued to appear in movie soundtracks, such as Harry Mancini's bossa nova song called "Nothing to Lose" for *The Party*.

Brazilian music and jazz began to mix in the 1950s. Classical guitarist Laurindo Almeida moved to the United States and joined Stan Kenton's big band, and later joined up with Bud Shank, Roy Harte, and Harry Babasin to explore the possibilities of combining traditional Brazilian music with jazz improvisation. In 1953 they recorded two ten-inch LPs under the name *Laurindo Almeida Quartet* (later re-issued on LP as *Brazilliance*). These sessions are considered to be the first recordings of Brazilian jazz in the United States. Shank's phrasing and light

sound suited the tunes and blended with Almeida's classical guitar, establishing a model for later improvisers. Bassist Harry Babasin added eighth-note syncopation to the traditional two-beat pattern played in Brazil, becoming the model for how bossa nova bass lines would be played in the United States. The copies of the albums that Almeida took back to Brazil, along with West Coast cool jazz recordings by Gerry Mulligan, Chet Baker, Paul Desmond, and others, inspired the younger generation of composers and performers looking for a new way to play samba. By the late 1950s the Brazilian jazz and **bossa nova** styles emerged in Brazil. Between 1960-61 Almeida won five Grammy Awards in instrumental and jazz categories.

Charlie Byrd and Herbie Mann were sent by the United States State Department to Brazil in 1961 as part of President Kennedy's "Good Neighbor" policy. The musicians got to know Brazilian music first hand, and returned to the U.S. with records to play for their friends. Byrd convinced Creed Taylor to produce *Jazz Samba* with him and saxophonist Stan Getz, which became the first jazz album to reach number one on the pop charts. Getz was awarded a Grammy for best solo performance of the year on Jobim's "Desafinado," which was soon recorded by many other artists, including Ella Fitzgerald, Al Hirt, and Coleman Hawkins.

In 1962 a large group of Brazilian musicians flew to New York to perform in concert in Carnegie Hall, along with Byrd and Getz. Some of the participants, including Sergio Mendes, Antônio Carlos Jobim, and João Gilberto stayed on afterwards in the United States to pursue performing, recording, and publishing opportunities. Bud Shank recorded *Bossa Nova: Shorty Rogers and His Giants* in 1962, and then *Bossa Nova Jazz Samba* and *Brasamba*. Pianist Clare Fischer replaced the role of chording instrument traditionally filled by nylon stringed guitar on these albums. The change of instrument, combined with Fischer's rich harmonic treatment gave the music more of a jazz sound. Stan Getz's 1963 album *Getz/Gilberto*, with guitarist João Gilberto, became an even bigger seller than *Jazz Samba*, spending ninety six weeks on the pop charts and winning four Grammys.

Bossa nova became an international sensation, and dozens of artists in the United States with little or no understanding of Brazilian culture hurried to exploit its popularity. Attempts were made to create a bossa nova dance fad in the early 1960s, which was fading by 1963 when vocalist Eydie Gormet recorded "Blame It on the Bossa Nova," a pop song which described bossa nova as "the dance of love." Bossa nova is generally enjoyed through listening, and like samba is played in 2/2 time, a feel that was lost when following the bossa nova dance steps taught in the United States in 4/4 time. Other regrettable commercial ventures included

Tippy and the Clovers' recording of "Bossa Nova Baby." The cover art of Paul Smith and Orchesra's "Brazilian Detour" was typical of the distorted image of Brazilian culture, serving it up an exotic product for American consumption.

Many jazz musicians found the bossa nova style an enjoyable vehicle for their improvisations. Some recorded only with only Americans, while others included Brazilians on their projects. Sonny Rollins put "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes" on *What's New* in 1962, with Jim Hall playing a bossa nova beat on the guitar. Ella Fitzgerald began singing Jobim's music in the mid 1960s, and in 1981 recorded a studio album of his compositions. She appeared with Jobim in 1967 on one of Frank Sinatra's TV specials. Sinatra himself did two albums with Jobim, the only composer that received so much of the star's attention. Miles Davis recorded *Quiet Nights* in 1963, a bossa nova album arranged by Gil Evans. Herbie Hancock's bossa nova, "Speak like a Child," was recorded with an American lineup including Thad Jones and Ron Carter. Bola Sete played with the Vince Guaraldi Trio from 1963-66. Bill Evans made friends with Brazilian pianist Luiz Eça and recorded *Ao Vivo no Chiko's Bar* in 1980. Evans wrote several Brazilian-inspired tunes, including the samba "The Dolphin," and a bossa nova, "Journey to Recife."

Some jazz artists have immersed themselves in Brazilian culture, and worked closely with native artists. In 1962 Herbie Mann recorded *Do the Bossa Nova With Herbie Mann* in Rio de Janeiro using top players such as Antônio Carlos Jobim, Dom Um Romão, and Baden Powell. Mann returned to Brazil in 1963 to record an album entitled *Do The Bossa Nova* with an all-star Brazilian lineup that included Sergio Mendes, Baden Powell, Luis Carlos Vinhas, and Antônio Carlos Jobim. Cannonball Adderly was interested in knowing about the roots of Brazilian music, and recorded *Cannonball's Bossa Nova* in 1963 with the Bossa Rio Sextet, led by Sergio Mendes on piano. In 1987 Sarah Vaughn recorded a smooth jazz album in Brazil with electric pianos, synthesizers, a Brazilian rhythm section, and Milton Nascimento, produced by Sergio Mendes. Joe Henderson released *Double Rainbow: Music of Antônio Carlos Jobim* in 1995 with two groups—a Brazilian quartet led by Eliane Elias, and an American jazz trio with pianist Herbie Hancock and drummer Jack DeJohnette. Pat Metheny was influenced by the music from artists such as Antônio Carlos Jobim and Milton Nascimento, and has blended Brazilian elements into his contemporary jazz style. His guitar voicings and chord progressions were influenced by Tonhinho Horta (who himself was inspired by Baden Powell and Wes Montgomery), and he began adding Brazilian guest artists to his group in 1982 with the album *Offramp*. Clare Fischer learned the styles firsthand by working with Latin bands, picking up the language, and traveling. He was one of the few Americans to be called upon to contribute to projects produced

in Brazil, including writing arrangements for João Gilberto.

Many Brazilian artists have lived in the United States for extended periods of time, and in the process contributed to its musical life. Some, like Antônio Carlos Jobim, João Gilberto, and João Donato eventually moved back to Brazil, taking back influences picked up in the United States. Others, like Sergio Mendes, Oscar Castro Neves, and Eliane Elias remained. Percussionist Airto Moreira followed singer Flora Purim to the U.S. in the 1970s, and stayed to play with Miles Davis, Chick Corea and Return to Forever, Weather Report, and others. Downbeat magazine added the category of Percussionist to its readers' and critics' polls to recognize his contributions, which he won over twenty times between 1973 and 2002. There were many Latin percussionists from Cuban and Puerto Rico in the United States when he arrived, but they didn't have the same collection of instruments that he did. Historically the Portuguese allowed their slaves to maintain more African culture than did other colonizers of the New World, and as a result there continues to be a larger variety of percussion instruments in Brazil, including agogô, berimbau, cuica, ganzá, pandeiro, surdo, and tamborim. Airto introduced a number of innovations to percussion playing, including the practice of playing drum set and percussion instruments simultaneously, and using avant garde free techniques instead of constantly reinforcing the groove. His style of coloring, where the sound or an instrument becomes as important as the rhythm one plays has now become a standard practice in jazz groups. Other percussionists, such as Edison Machado, Dom Um Romão, Paulinho Da Costa, and Naná Vasconcelos, along with songwriters, singers, guitarists, and producers contributed to Brazilian music succeeding Cuban music as the biggest influence on Latin jazz in the United States during the 1960s.

The jazz swing style has a underlying pattern dividing the beat into a pair of uneven eighth notes, with the first lasting longer and the second being shorter. Jazz musicians perceive Brazilian and other Latin music as having even eighth note subdivisions, and find it a refreshing feel to mix into a set of swing tunes. The more subtle micro irregularities in samba beats when played by Brazilians is not usually noticed by Americans, or even if they sense it they have a hard time reproducing it, in the same way that Brazilians have a hard time swinging. Samba is full of syncopation, emphasizing melody notes and chords in between strong beats. It should be counted in 2/2 time, and often emphasizes the second rather than the first beat. This makes it hard for Americans to feel the music, since they are used to music in 4/4, with the first beat in the measure being the strongest. Bossa nova has less syncopation than samba and more emphasis on the downbeat, and as a result is easier for Americans to play.

The *Real Book*, a semi-underground collection of unlicensed transcriptions which emerged around the Berklee School of Music in the 1970s included twelve of Jobim's compositions, and became the defacto standard repertoire for jazz musicians coming up through university jazz programs and playing casual jobs. Hal Leonard legitimized the series with a nearly identical volume in 2005. Brazilian chord progressions are enjoyable for jazz musicians to improvise over, in part because of their mix of standard progressions (i.e. *ii V I*) with more adventurous turns and modulations, and many have become vehicles for improvisation. They are typically performed using traditional style jazz arrangements, where the "head" (or theme) is played as written the first time, after which the players take turns soloing over the song's chord progression, and then end with a return to the original tune. Sometimes players change to double time to switch gears from eighth to sixteenth note lines, making the improvisation more intricate and challenging. In Brazil arrangements generally emphasize the groove, the instrumental parts are written out rather than improvised, and the melody sung, with part or all of the lyrics repeated.

While Brazilian music's influence has been most strongly felt in the jazz world, it has also affected pop music. Sergio Mendes has been the most commercially successful of the Brazilian immigrants. He had participated in the development of Brazilian jazz before moving to the United States in 1964, where he worked on recordings by Art Farmer and Antônio Carlos Jobim before forming Brazil '65, which the next year turned into the famous group Brazil '66. His arrangements of songs by Jorge Ben ("Mas Que Nada"), The Beatles ("The Fool on the Hill") and Burt Bacharach ("The Look of Love") mixed elements of Brazilian and American music and became instant hits. Burt Bacharach's tunes were naturally suited for such treatments. His "Walk On By" and "I Say a Little Prayer" integrated the bossa nova beat with American popular music. Dionne Warwick, who sang so many of Bacharach's hits later lived and recorded for a time in Brazil. The style of many pop musicians such as Michael Franks were influenced by bossa nova, for others the effect shows up in single songs, such as Stevie Wonder's "You Are The Sunshine Of My Life" and "My Cherie Amour", Carole King's "What Have You Got To Lose", Michel Legrand's "Watch What Happens", and James Taylor's "Only A Dream In Rio."

The Portuguese language has been a barrier, as well as a boost to the spread of Brazilian music abroad. Brazil was discovered by the Portuguese in 1500, and its Portuguese-speaking citizens feel a special identity setting themselves from their Spanish-speaking neighbors. Brazilian music faces a language barrier in the United States. It is nearly impossible to translate the exact meaning of a song's lyric from one language to another while maintaining the poetic appeal of the

phrases, let alone doing so while matching up the words with their corresponding melody notes. Instead, lyricists try to maintain something of the original subject and tone, while using appealing words and images in the new language. One of Antônio Carlos Jobim's motivations for coming to the United States was to maintain the integrity of the English versions of his compositions. Some suffered in translation, such as "No More Blues" whose lyrics have nothing to do with the original version "Chega de Saudades." The word "saudades" does not exist in English, it is something along the lines of bittersweet longing. Even when the meaning of the words can be translated, the cultural context is often lost, diminishing the impact of the text. For example, Jobim's *Águas de Março* (*Waters of March*) refers to the rain that comes in March, Rio de Janeiro's stormiest month. In the southern hemisphere this takes place in the fall rather than the spring, due to the reversed seasons. The rains of March therefore draw up different associations for Brazilians living in Rio than Americans.

While the Portuguese language can prevent access by American listeners to an important dimension of Brazilian song, many people find its sweet sound mixed with nasal vowels appealing, even when the meaning of the words is not understood. American singers Lani Hall and Janis Hansen were taught the Portuguese text to "Mas Que Nada" phonetically, and their performance with Brazil '66 became a big hit. The exotic accent of Brazilian singers performing English lyrics can be an attractive quality, for example as heard in the wistful singing of Astrud Gilberto, who charmed listeners on the Grammy-winning album *Getz/Gilberto*. Accents that are too strong can be distracting, whereas the traces in Flora Purim's add spice to her expressive voice, adding unique overtones like Miles Davis' Harmon mute.

**Samba**, Brazil's national form of music and dance, is recognized and appreciated around the world, and samba schools (*Escolas de Samba*) have formed in many cities across the United States. These drum and dance groups are often led by Brazilian musicians, providing opportunities for Americans to learn to play and perform Brazilian music under the guidance of a native expert. The groups' productions take place on a smaller scale than the Carnival parades in Rio de Janeiro, but allow the musicians and audience to experience some of the sense of enjoyment and community spirit as felt in Brazilian celebrations.

Rhythms like samba and baião are open and not overly complicated, and combine well with other styles, allowing Brazilian influences to flow into projects that mix different traditions into a new type of world music. Paul Winter first went to Brazil in 1962 under the auspices of the U.S. State Department, playing 160 concerts in 23 countries. *Jazz Meets Bossa Nova*, the first recording his sextet

made for Columbia, enjoyed some success. He lived in Brazil from 1965 to 1966, where he recorded *Rio* and *The Sound of Ipanema* with Carlos Lyra, Roberto Menescal, the Tamba Trio, and Luiz Bonfá. Winter went on to found the group The Paul Winter Consort, becoming one of the first world music groups combining elements of African, Asian and South American cultures with jazz. In 1970 band members Ralph Towner, Paul McCandless, Glen Moore, and Collin Walcott left to form the jazz and world music group Oregon. Many other musicians have worked on international projects, such as Gordon Sumner (aka Sting) who composed “Fragile” for *Nothing Like The Sun* (1987) after visiting Latin America with Amnesty International and meeting victims of government oppression. The album featured him singing the song in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Two years later he became involved in efforts to preserve the Brazilian rainforest. Paul Simon used Olodum, the samba-reggae percussion group from Bahia, on his *Rhythm of the Saints* album, as did Michael Jackson on the music video “They Don’t Care About Us.” The percussionist Airto Moreira and his wife, vocalist Flora Purim worked with Mickey Hart on *Planet Drum*, the first Grammy award in the Best World Music Album category.

Samba and bossa nova rhythms were among the first to appear in **keyboard** and **electronic instruments**, reflecting the fact that Brazilian samba and bossa nova have established themselves as styles recognized and enjoyed around the world.

#### RELATED ARTICLES

Brazil; Bossa Nova; Carnaval; Instruments, Keyboard; Instruments, Electronic;  
Jobim, Antônio Carlos; Miranda, Carmen; MPB; Samba; Veloso, Caetano; Villa-  
Lobos, Hector

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## SELECTED WEB SITES

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<http://www.biscoitofino.com.br>

<http://brazilianpiano.com>

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by Clare Fischer.

## FURTHER VIEWING

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Camus, Marcel. *Orpheu Negro (Black Orpheus)*. Criterion Collection, 1999.

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Sinatra, Frank, Antônio Carlos Jobim, and Ella Fitzgerald. *Frank Sinatra: A Man and His Music + Ella + Jobim*". DVD. Warner Brothers, 1999. Jobim put in role of "Latin lover" playing guitar and singing with Sinatra.

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