

Learning Bossanova

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In sheet music edited in Brasil, Bossa nova is written in 2/4. When you see it in that way, perform a quarter as a half, 1/8 as 1/4, 1/16 as 1/8.... playing pulse in quarter notes, no in: half notes. In other countries, as U.S.A., Bossa is published in 4/4.

You may find lots of stuff to play here in LJP in "Jazz piano links" in Transcriptions section, "A C Jobim Latin real Book". And also in: www.ethosbrasil.com/nav/partit.htm

Antonio Carlos Jobim was one of its creators and the greatest composer, mixing elements: of jazz and slow samba.

For reading and hearing scores please click on "play" in Playback Controls (green triangle).

Before the performance of a bossanova you must feel and understand the rhythm patterns.

This is the basic pattern of Bossanova (in 4/4) :

The image shows a musical score for Bossanova in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a piano part (treble and bass clefs), a ride-snare part (bass clef), a cymbal part (bass clef), and a bass-drum part (bass clef). The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The ride-snare part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The cymbal part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The bass-drum part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The second system shows the piano part with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The chords are labeled as Am, Bm7-5, E7-9, Am, Bm7-5, and E7-9.

A nice tune to play in this way is Black Orpheus.

Right hand plays melody and rhythmic chords.

Left hand plays bass.

Chords in triads must be enriched with seventh or sixth.

See "Beginning scales, chords, modes, arpeggios" at *Albetan's Area*.

Practice a lot on first phrase until mastering style and rhythm.

A m Bm7-5 E7-9 A m Bm7-5 E7

Practice this loop until you can do it no thinking, no counting, and feeling rhythm. Proceed in the same way with the rest of phrases.

This is an easy style for playing bossa in Solo Piano.

You are playing melody, rhythmic chords and bass, the job of 3 musicians.

Perform some of your favourite bossas in this style.

If melody is difficult or fast, play it alone or harmonized with one chord note.

Bossa nova pattern:

Bossa nova pattern consists in two bars. Wood-block or Ride-snare play a characteristic figure that is the soul of bossa nova.

It is similar to Cuban clave, but retarding the last beat in an eight-note value.

Bossa wood-block:	x x x x x	b
	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 -	
Cuban clave:	x x x x x	

Bossanova in Solo Piano:

Once mastered bossa pattern, practice first theme of *The Girl from Ipanema*. Perform it in four voices as in *Axis of sevenths and thirds in Melodic Vocings 1* (Albetan's Area).

FM7 G7

An easy style for performing a bossa in Solo Piano is Axis of seventh and thirds.

Right hand plays melody and third or seventh as a countermelody.

Left hand plays rhythmic bass and seventh or third as a counterpoint.

G m7 G^b7-5 FM7 G^b7-5

How to comp a Bossa?

Rhythmic chords may be performed as in Black Orpheus.

Bass plays Chord root altering with fifth.

Contemporary styles of jazz voicings sound great in Bossa, like A/B forms of voicings, axis of seventh and third, quartal voicings.

You may find good stuff about it here at *Albetan's Area*.

Try to comp your favourite bossas, imagining the sound of melody as played by a virtual musician, no thinking in notes, nor in sheet music.

So you begin to develop a great internal hearing.

D m7 G7

EXERCISE: Accompany the first theme of WAVE by Jobim.
Play it over Chord chart with A/B forms of voicings,
no reading notes of my performance.

DM7 B^bdim A m7 D7^b9

If you know this tune, try to imagine a sound like a sax playing melody and you perform accompaniment as comping a virtual musician.

Remember this is not an exercise of reading music but performing chords and developing internal ear.

If you don't know this tune, work only over the chord chart.

G M7 C 13 F# 13 F# 7^b13 B 9 B 7^b9

Try to comp in this way all your preferred bossas.

E9sus E9 B^b13 A 7^b13 D m7 G7 D m7 G7 D m7 G7

Good luck and enjoy Bossanova.

