

They paid close attention to the rhythm.

The music was largely notated in 2/4 time, unlike North American ballads, the vast majority of which are in 4/4. (When these Brazilian songs were brought north, publishers had them renotated in 4/4.)

The bass player used an eighth-note pickup just before the first beat of each bar, setting up a da-boom, da-boom pattern. And the drummer played a pattern of eighth notes over this, often with other percussion instruments added. This gave the songs motion, even in cases where the composer chose to sit on one chord for a comparatively long time. The rhythms were complex and incredibly stimulating, even in the gentlest ballads, such as Jobim's "Outra Vez" and "Meditação".

I was approached about making a State Department journey as tour manager for the Paul Winter Sextet through all of Latin America (except Cuba). It was in part my interest in this new music that impelled me to go. We left Chicago on February 1, 1962; the tour lasted nearly six months. We traveled down the west coast of South America and then crossed to Argentina. In Buenos Aires I began to hear still more of Gilberto and Jobim, including two albums that had not yet been issued in the US.

After stops in Paraguay and Uruguay, we entered Brazil from the south, first landing in Pôrto Alegre. Samba seemed to be everywhere. The country really seemed to swing — *balançar*, as they say in Portuguese. I remember a young man in an elevator playing a samba with a set of keys on a ring. I saw a donkey pulling a two-wheel cart; even that animal seemed to swing. I was already familiar with a song that Gilberto had recorded, Dorival Caymmi's "Samba de Minha Terra" ("Samba of My Land"). The release says: "Whoever doesn't like samba isn't a good guy./He is bad in the head or sick in the foot./I was born with the samba, in the samba I was created./From the damned samba I have never separated."