

the three best-known lyricists to put English words to Jobim's songs. Are the English words faithful to the meaning of the songs?

OC-N: No, I think [after a while] Jobim started drafting [lyrics], getting more involved with the lyricists themselves. Some of the [early] lyrics do not represent the original, some of them are rough translations and [they] miss some things. What Americans are missing when the lyrics are done from scratch is the fact that there's a lot of poetry, which for me is very dear.

RS: Well, Vinicius [de Moraes] was not just a lyricist/composer, he was actually a poet, right, one of the great poets of Brazil?

OC-N: Exactly. Way before I met Vinicius, I studied him in school; he ended up being best man when I first married and becoming a dear friend. He was an established poet with several books published.

RS: We've talked a lot about bossa nova but we know that Jobim did not limit himself to that style.

OC-N: Oh, don't forget he was a composer before the bossa nova movement.

RS: What kind of things did he do?

OC-N: In general, either straight sambas or a type of slow samba called samba canção. And in later years he started playing baiões. "Passarim" and "Borzeguim" are two examples.

RS: How would you describe a baião?

OC-N: It's a rhythm that comes from the northeast of Brazil and it's (*scats*), the accent is on the downbeat and then on the up[beat] of two (*scats*). And Jobim [also], all his life.