

Specific Terminology

Chest register - Singing in a low register

Rubato - To play with the timing of the written notes

Syllabic - To sing one syllable per note.

Performing Forces

Female Voice:

The vocal line is low in the female range, using the chest register. It covers a range of a minor tenth (an octave plus a minor third) from E below middle C to the G above.

Acoustic Bass Guitar:

The bass part is active and does much more than play the root of the chord. The very opening of the piece features a *virtuosic* bass solo with use of *double stops*, wide leaps, rapid semiquaver passages, a *mordent* and a *harmonic*. In places, during verse 1 (before the acoustic guitar enters), the bass appears to be playing two parts, with lower bass notes alternating with higher chords, rather like a ragtime piano accompaniment.

Acoustic Guitar:

The acoustic guitar joins the accompaniment from bar 23 onwards and plays a *virtuosic* solo between Verse 2 and bar 89. In its accompaniment role, the guitar plays a mixture of plucked chords and small melodic passages, some of which cover the long notes at the end of vocal phrases. There are also passages (bars 25–27) where the guitar line seems to *imitate* the vocal part.

Structure

Introduction (Bars 1-3) | Link (Bars 4-19)

Verse 2 (Bars 23-54) | Guitar Solo (Bars 55-88)

Voice and bass duet (bar 89-104) followed by Coda to end

Melody

- The words are set *syllabically*, with one musical note to each syllable of text.
- The vocal line contains many leaps, and also some quite complex rhythms – triplets, semiquavers, rests.
- Bar 4 features a rising *arpeggio*.
- The first (or second) note of each phrase descends by a semitone or a tone in a long downward *sequence*.
- The melody in Verse 1 is mostly *disjunct* compared to Verse 2 which is mostly *conjunct*.

Tonality

- The key of the piece is B minor.
- Many Bossa Novas use minor keys.
- Despite the complexity of some of the harmony, the music does not *modulate* (change key).

Tempo, Metre and Rhythm

- The tempo during bars 1-3 is very free (*rubato*).
- Verse 1 is generally slow and played *rubato*.
- The tempo increases and becomes more established with the introduction of the Bossa Nova pattern (bar 19).
- The piece is (apart from two bars) wholly in 4/4 *quadruple time*.
- The bass part in Verse 1 is complicated, making more use of *syncopated* rhythms than the vocals.
- The vocal line has longer notes in verse and less use of *triplets*.

Texture

- The introduction is mostly *monophonic* though there are a couple of double stops on the bass
- The texture throughout is mostly *melody with accompaniment*.
- There are some *polyphonic* moments such as bars 89-104.

Harmony

- The harmonies are essentially *tonal*.
- Harmonies are influenced by jazz and so are often complex. The piece though is based around the chords of I, II, IV and V.
- *Chord extensions* are a feature of this style with the use of sevenths, ninths, elevenths and thirteenth.
- There are also examples of *diminished seventh* chords (bar 35) and *flattened fifth* chords (bar 44).
- *Chromatic* chords are also used C#7 (bar 31) and C and F major (bars 27/28).
- Most sections end with a *perfect cadence*. With some *imperfect cadences* (bar 11).
- The chord progressions allow for a *descending chromatic* movement in the bass line (bars 30-38).

