RICHARD BOUKAS BRAZILIAN GUITAR PANORAMA

AUTHENTIC FLUENCY IN ACCOMPANIMENT AND SOLO GUITAR TEXTURES

NEW YORK GUITAR SEMINAR July 10, 2016

WORKSHOP PAGE

www.boukas.com/new-york-guitar-seminar

CONTACT richard@boukas.com

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Richard Boukas

Internationally acclaimed guitarist, vocalist, composer, educator, author and journalist, he has led contemporary music ensembles for over thirty years and performed as an itinerant solo artist. Boukas is recognized as one of this country's most important exponents and advocates for Brazilian music, and was chosen "Best Brazilian Jazz Guitarist in the U.S." by GuitarOne Magazine. Among his recent solo appearances include B.B. King's Latin Guitar Festival and Global Guitar Festival at Subrosa. In June 2016, he was guest artist-educator at the prestigious classical guitar conference New York Guitar Seminar presented by Mannes College at New School University.

Since 2008 he is leader of *Quarteto Moderno* with stellar counterparts *Lucas Pino* (woodwinds), *Gustavo Amarante* (bass) and *Mauricio Zottarelli* (drums). The ensemble's repertoire features Boukas's diverse original Brazilian jazz compositions. Their debut CD released in June 2016 is *Quarteto Moderno Live! Ao Vivo!* He is also leader of *Trio Brasileiro* alongside Amarante and Zottarelli, which explores the music of Minas Gerais composers including *Milton Nascimento, Toninho Horta, Sérgio Santos*, the lineage of Brazilian guitar from *Garôto* to *Guinga*, and classics from the Brazilian Songbook (MPB). He is also vocalist-percussionist and composer-arranger with *Gary Morgan's Panamericana Big Band*.

Among his most important collaborations was his duo with pianist-composer *Jovino Santos Neto* (formerly of *Hermeto Pascoal Group*). Their recording *Balaio* presents their original compositions and those of Pascoal. In 2012 he formed a duo with Croatian tambura virtuoso *Filip Novosel*, exploring new connections in Brazilian, Balkan, jazz and contemporary classical music. In 2013 they released *Live at St. Michael's* CD/DVD. Other Boukas recordings as leader include *Tudo de Bom* (featuring Pascoal's *Calendário do Som*), *Amazôna, Embarcadero* and *Commitment*. In 2015, he formed a Brazilian Duo with bassist *Jeff Fuller* and in 2016, a chamber duo with virtuoso cellist *Wendy Law*.

His first trip to Brazil was as guest artist-educator at the prestigious *Campos do Jordão Winter Festival* in São Paulo state. He has returned to Brazil frequently to collaborate with numerous Brazilian artists, present educational residencies and conduct archival and field research.

A mainstay faculty member at New York City's *New School Jazz & Contemporary Program* since 1995, *Mannes College* (1989-95) and *William Paterson University* (1985-93), he teaches in several course areas including *Brazilian Jazz Ensemble*, *Brazilian Choro Ensemble* (founded 1996 and 2008 respectively), Improvisation, Ear Training, Guitar Sightreading, Jazz Vocal and Renaissance Choral Music. In September 2010 he received the prestigious New School Distinguished University Teaching Award. In 2011-12 he facilitated the launch of New School Jazz's student exchange program with *Federal University of Minas Gerais* (UFMG). Recent major concert projects he produced at New School Jazz include *música mineira* (featuring music of legendary composers from Minas Gerais) and two *Brazilian Choro Ensemble* concerts: *Ernesto Nazareth 150 Year Celebration* and the landmark 2014 *Pixinguinha and Contemporaries* at *Mannes Concert Hall*, which was documented as a non-commercial CD release.

In 2015, he joined the faculty of New York Jazz Workshop, which specializes in continuing education for adults. In July 2016, he conducted the master class *Brazilian Guitar Panorama* at the prestigious *New York Guitar Seminar* held at Mannes College. A four-time recipient of the *NEA Grant in Jazz Performance*, his guest artist residencies include *Harvard, Cornell, Lamont School of Music/Denver Univ., Univ. of Toronto, Univ. Louisville, Univ. Arizona/Tucson, Cincinnati Conservatory*, and *National Guitar Workshop*.

Richard holds an MA in Composition from *Queens College/Aaron Copland School of Music*, for which he presented his thesis on the music of *Hermeto Pascoal*. Besides his Brazilian jazz repertoire, he has composed numerous chamber works for ensembles including *La Catrina String Quartet*, *PUBLIQuartet String Quartet*, *Berklee World String Ensemble*, *Modern Mandolin Quartet* and *Lamont Saxophone Quartet*, He has composed an extensive body of solo Brazilian guitar music, including the seven-movement *Guinga Suite* dedicated to the Brazilian master composer-guitarist. He has created numerous a cappella choral works: cutting-edge adaptations of Brazilian popular classics and a collection of twenty *Beatles Motets*. Choral collaborations include *Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble* and *Queens College Vocal Ensemble*. He is a composer member of *Chamber Music America*, *American Composers Forum* and *Long Island Composers Alliance*. Apart from his own creative work, Richard has performed in Broadway pits for numerous shows including *In the Heights*, *Chicago, Lion King* and *Les Misérables* and *Crazy for You*. He is endorsing artist for *LaBella Strings* since 1980.

www.boukas.com CONTACT: richard@boukas.com

ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES FOR FLUENCY IN BRAZILIAN MUSIC and ACCOMPANIMENT NEW YORK GUITAR SEMINAR www.boukas.com/new-york-guitar-seminar

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Accompaniment does not begin and end with learning a basic 2-bar pattern and repeating it with no variation. This is not musical.

In a duo situation, you need to **think like a complete rhythm section**: comping instrument, bass player and percussionist all rolled into one cohesive texture. That being said, you have to study and understand the role and vocabulary of each rhythm section instrument, and common percussion that is played in each genre. This is not like comping sparsely without bass function in a jazz situation, which at times can be adequate to support a soloist or melody player.

To assimilate the core stylistic aspects of any Brazilian genre, you need to study its idiosyncratic melodic, harmonic and rhythmic characteristics as it reveals itself in core repertoire spanning its many eras of development— its players, composers and interpreters. For those genres that have a more folkloric basis, it is important to study the "roots" music, even if it is not as melodically and harmonically sophisticated as the music you are really interested in playing.

To be a good accompanist, your sense of time and rhythmic acuity has to be rock solid and razor sharp, but, however, NOT mechanical.

Internalizing rhythms and polyrhythms is as much a neurological learning curve as a musical one.

There is a range of variations and accents common to each percussion and accompaniment instrument that helps inform us about the scope of what is possible in a real playing situation.

Think "perpetual variation" and an organic sense of **development** within what is recognized to be the range of rhythmic vocabulary for that instrument and genre. Build up rhythmic density and dynamics towards high points in the phrase, then back off and play less busy to build back up again.

You have to be loose and relaxed in your whole body to execute highly syncopated, difficult and dense rhythms. This includes right hand independence to execute as many as three separate rhythms that comprise a complete accompaniment. The same is true for solo guitar textures.

Assuming a rigid classical guitar pose on a footstool is the LAST thing you want to do! You have to feel loose inside your own skin to allow the music to flow through your body and to navigate the intense level of syncopation that is a hallmark of most Brazilian genres. The upper body must be supple, yet not in a position that compromises your ease of execution and technique.

Loosen your body up before playing with some gentle stretches, yoga, tai chi, a loose walk, swimming, running, etc. **Our body itself is an instrument** and its symbiotic relationship to the guitar as an integrated entity is critical to feeling the music with every molecule of our being.

Be conscious of your breath while playing at all times. We often have the bad habit of holding our breath or breathing very shallow and not exhaling completely. Breath is vital to giving your playing a more supple feeling, and making technically difficult passages and faster tempi easier to execute. And don't forget: **your brain needs oxygen to concentrate effectively on difficult music!**

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Learn to play idiomatic rhythms for the more accessible percussion instruments:

ganza (shaker, egg), triangle (pulse instruments), tamborim, agogô, surdo (accent instruments).

This will help you **develop rhythmic continuity and accuracy away from the guitar**. Practice both with a metronome and with representative recordings.

If you are more adventurous with tackling polyrhythms, play zabumba drum, or any two or three rhythmic elements from a genre on drum set.

Idiomatic Syncopation (including the rhythmic anticipation and delay of harmonies) **is the most vital aspect of Brazilian rhythm.** A certain level of syncopation must eventually resolve to rhythms that are more centered in the beat, like eighth notes and quarter notes. There needs to be a balance between the two so syncopation can be perceived as "funky" in relation to "on the beat" rhythms.

It's the elasticity of rhythmic phrasing, variation of attack, dynamics and duration that makes you "swing". This takes years, sometimes decades to develop- so be patient.

For every hour of practicing or playing, do two hours of critical listening to representative recordings.

Pick up all these subtleties of phrasing by listening not only to guitar players, but all solo melody instruments and vocalists, pianists, bass players, drummers, percussionists, etc. They all speak the same rhythmic and articulative language, only assuming different roles.

Transcribe comping off of authentic recordings- again, not just guitarists and pianists, but bassists, drummers and percussionists. Transform raw percussion sourcerhythms into well-informed, idiomatic accompaniment. Compare the rhythmic phrasing of a vocalist or other melodic instrument with the original notated score of the music, and you'll be amazed at the differences.

Go out and hear live music played by great Brazilian musicians and watch live videos. Body language, communication within the rhythm section and between soloist and rhythm section are vital aspects of assimilating accompaniment vocabulary and becoming part of a larger rhythm section unit.

Learn basic Brazilian Portuguese- assimilating the flow and sound of the language as spoken colloquially, in poetry and as sung (letras) will enlighten you that the rhythms and flow of this music have deep roots in natural speech rhythms and also informed by African and indigenous language, drumming and other percussion instruments.

These are just some of the essential issues to consider when desiring to acquire proficiency in Brazilian music as a player (improvising or interpretive soloist, accompanist), composer and creative soul. In fact, this is true of any style of music. Take a long, deep bath in it, and eventually it will stick.

The most important thing through the journey is to embrace challenge with joy and *not* fear.

Richard Boukas July 2016

Brazilian Guitar Panorama: Genre-Based Comping

SAMBA CANÇÃO Tempo Range = (54 > 62)

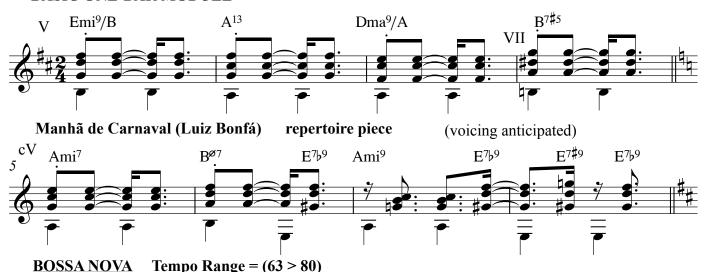
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A slower ballad form of BOSSA NOVA. Soft attack.

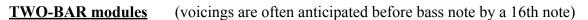
Voicings: Drop 3 (6 X 4-3-2) played (p- i m a)

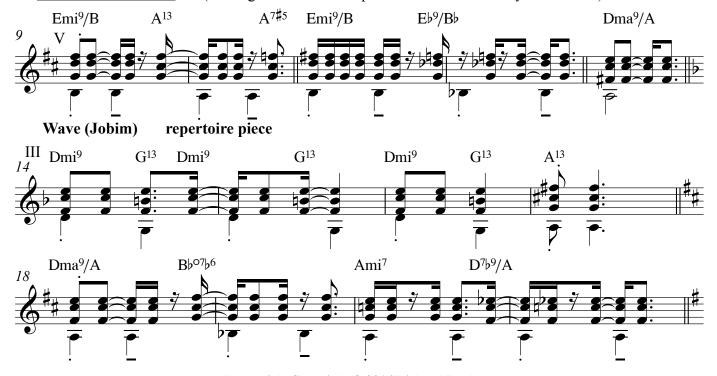
Bass notes can be dropped with a bass player or played at softer dynamic level than voicing. **Inversion bass notes** very common. Bassists play bass note (8ve basso) or the ROOT below it. **PRACTICE with metronome: Play voicing/sing bass (then reverse); then play both parts.**

BASIC ONE-BAR MODULE



A lighter, slower form of SAMBA with a softer overall attack and not as syncopated as Samba. ONE-BAR MODULE used for Samba Canção above also can work for Bossa Nova. Notice short bassnote downbeat and full duration 2nd beat. This imitates the surdo drum. Bassnote finger lifts up while voicing is sustained as written. Bass durations can also be equal.





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SAMBA Tempo Range = 88 > 124

A deeper "groove" drawn from polyrhythmic percussion layers, more aggressive attack. Voicings: (4-3-2) played p- i m a with (5-6) alternating Root > low 5th "surdo" bass. An optional 4th voice on E string can be played with pinky.

Bass notes can be dropped with bass player or played at softer dynamic level than voicing. With a bass player, alternating 5 > 6 bass note can be simplified by repeating the first bass note.

TWO-BAR MODULES Based on Tamborim pattern



Note: 1/8th notes followed by syncopation chain

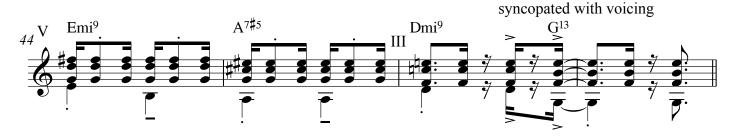


Agogô pattern: Alternate string groups (4-3-2) & (3-2-1) for **"agudo"** (high) & **"grave"** (low) effect. This voicing shift also matches basic **cuica drum** pattern (can be imitated with glisses on G & B strings)









CHORO Tempo range = 100 > 60 (Choro Canção)

Voicings: Vary with harmonic and rhythmic context; harmonic extensions rarely go beyond the 9th. Note articulations and dynamics

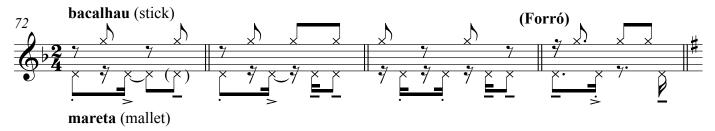
Moving basslines (baixarias) on (4-5-6) common at melodic phrase endings- deserves its own treatment. Inversions and stepwise basslines extremely common.



4 <u>BAIÃO</u> Tempo range = 100 > 126 (Forró) Basic rhythmic elements: zabumba and triangle Prevalent modes: Dorian, Lydian Dominant

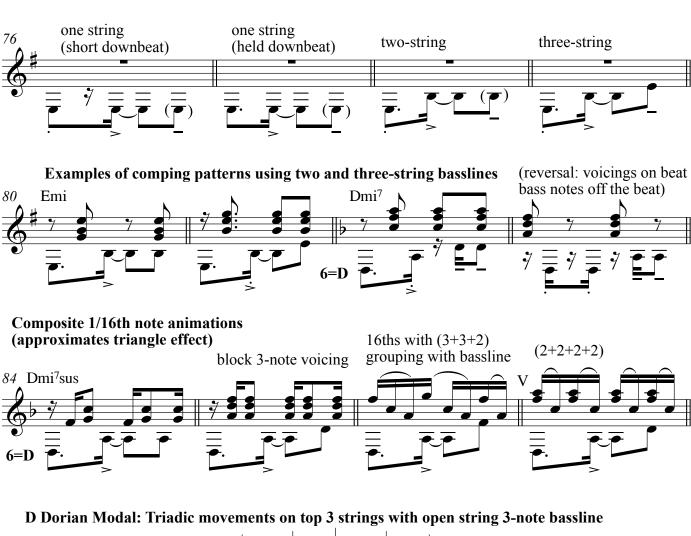
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Zabumba drum sourcerhythms: mareta = bassline (p) bacalhau = comping voicing (i-m-a)



- Practice: tap mareta with R hand (on bridge), tap bacalhau with L hand (on upper bout)

 Then adapt to bassline (p) and voicing (i m a). Note syncopated bassline accent on 2nd attack.
- **Basslines** adapted from mareta content can be distributed along one, two or three strings. Also, the third attack on upbeat of 2 can be simplified as a tied quarter note.
- **Downbeats can be held** to a dotted 1/8 note to achieve a more sustained texture overall.





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Alternate voicing rhythms: apply to above triads <u>with bassline</u> of choice (also see above)



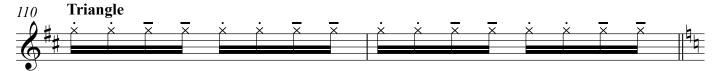
D Lydian dominant (mixolydian #4) adaptation

Try all previous rhythmic modules for voicings with one, two or three-string basslines.





Triangle (triângulo) is the continuous 16th note pulse which anchors baião. Note the alternate pairs of **muted and open attacks** (muting done with left hand).



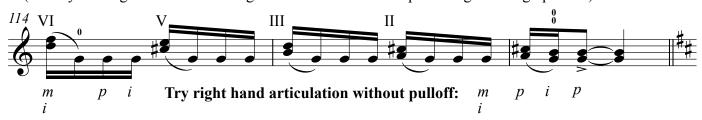
Mock triangle imitation

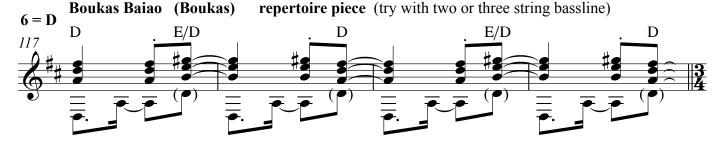
Pull B string in front of E string and fret firmly on 17th fret (A); play close to bridge (p - i)



G Lydian dominant modal using open G string pulloffs

(also try starting at 12th fret moving downwards in 3rds or open strings moving upwards)





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$\underline{\text{VALSA}}$ Tempo range = 80 > 160 (Valsa Brilhante)

Downbeat long bass notes supported by **voicings** which can be played as follows: On **beat 2 only**, **beats 2 & 3**, **slightly broken** (m. 3) or **arpeggiated all 1/8 notes**.

At slower tempos, more movement is possible in basslines, harmonies and inner voices. In **solo contexts**, slower valsas tend to employ more **rubato**.

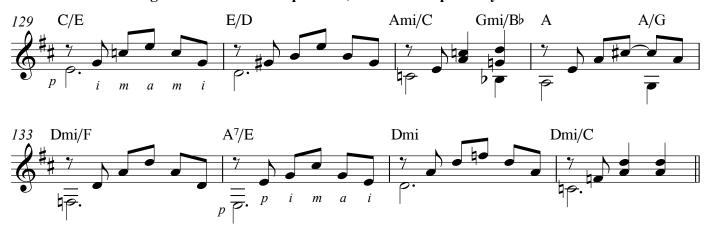
When melody is at rest, basslines and arpeggiated voicings can be used to maintain movement.



More continuous eighth note movement with arpeggiated voicings



Note predominance of inversion bass notes. This is because VALSA is a core genre in CHORO Repertoire, which is ubiquitously rich in inversions.



Faceira (Ernesto Nazareth) repertoire piece (accompaniment by Maurício Carrilho)



Manhã de Carnaval

Luis Bonfá / Antônio Maria

Samba cançao J = 56





Samba de Orfeu





Boukas Baião (guitar version)





