

Arts, Linguistics, Literature and Language Research Journal

THE MUSICAL TRAJECTORY OF JUAREZ MOREIRA

Gustavo Frederico Bracher e Silva

School of Music: ``Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais``

Department of Performing Arts:

``Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto``

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2364-5509>

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/2535780037239301>

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Abstract: This work presents an interview with Juarez Moreira accompanied by several musical illustrations in which he talks about his influences, career and composition process.

Keywords: Juarez Moreira, biography, composer, performer.

Juarez Moreira and a brief musical history

INTRODUCTION

The composer, arranger, guitarist and guitarist Juarez Ferreira Moreira, known as “Juarez” or simply “Juá” by those closest to him and the musicians with whom he shares the stage, is one of the central figures of instrumental music in Minas Gerais, considered one of the pillars of the “Escola Mineira de Violão” alongside Chiquito Braga and Toninho Horta.

The biographical material on Juarez Moreira to date is somewhat scarce. We found a succinct promotional biography on its official website as well as notes on journalistic websites with the same purpose. To date, the largest academic work that addresses aspects of Juarez Moreira’s biography and production appears to be Daniel Menezes Lovisi’s recent doctoral thesis, “The construction of the Minas Gerais guitar: singularities, styles and regional identities in instrumental popular music of Belo Horizonte”, 2017.¹

This work draws on the very close contact I have with the musician, since I have worked with Juarez, since 2005, at the FIV (Belo Horizonte International Guitar Festival), an event that takes place almost every year in the capital of Minas Gerais and is organized by a team that, in addition to Juarez, includes Alieksey Viana and Fernando Araújo. Due to this proximity, I was able to follow, over time, several shows, conversations and chats with Juarez, having already played with him on television programs and guitar circles.

1. The thesis focuses on the procedures of the Minas Gerais guitar school, its history and characteristics, and makes a deeper biographical survey of Chiquito Braga, Toninho Horta, Juarez Moreira and Gilvan de Oliveira.

This contact also allowed several interviews to be carried out, and especially the interview presented on video in this work for the 3rd “Nas Nuvens...” Music Congress.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Juarez, who began his career as a professional musician in the 1970s, has to date released 13 CDs and 1 DVD of his own works, which range from his own compositions to arrangements, in various instrumental formations: trios (bass, drums, acoustic guitar/guitar), quartets (bass, drums, acoustic guitar/guitar, wind instrument/keyboards) solo guitar, duo with singers, string quartet, orchestra, etc. His recordings and performances are also characterized by the presence of electric guitar and acoustic guitar, with a certain predominance of the latter. Juarez’s work is also present in more than 55 appearances as a special guest in recordings with musicians of various generations from all over Brazil. He performed alongside big names in Brazilian music such as Egberto Gismonti, Ivan Lins, Milton Nascimento, Yamandú Costa, Naná Vasconcelos, Wagner Tiso, Toninho Horta, Maria Bethânia, Gal Costa, among others and performed numerous performances in countries such as the United States, France, Venezuela, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Finland, Argentina, Venezuela, playing in theaters such as Lincoln Center (NY).

THE BEGINNING IN GUANHÃES

Juarez was born in Guanhanes, in the interior of Minas Gerais, in 1954. His first musical influences came from his father Rivadavia Moreira, an amateur guitarist. Juarez also highlights the importance of the family environment and the presence of the guitar on vinyl records listened to at home, such as those by Dilermando Reis, Luis Bonfá

and João Gilberto for his musical training.

We listened to everything, dad had records by Luiz Bonfá, Jobim, João Gilberto, Dilermando Reis. We had a very good education, and Brazil at the time was very curious, it didn't have television as strong, but it had radio and an oral guitar culture [...]. So, the family has this visceral relationship with music (GALILEIA, 2012, p. 313)

His grandfather Guilherme Alves Moreira, of Spanish descent, a dentist by profession and an amateur musician, played several instruments, and performed alongside his brother, Valério Alves Moreira, a flutist, at the Cine Metr pole in Belo Horizonte during the silent film era. His uncle, William Moreira, was a lawyer and guitarist, "brilliant, who played Spanish music, classical music, etc... and was a friend of Tom Jobim" (MOREIRA, 2017) was a great incentive for Juarez to pursue a career as a professional musician.

Within this environment of family tradition linked to music, Juarez, at the age of twelve, began playing acoustic guitar with his father's instruments, "a Gibson ES 125 T from 1957 bought in 1958 and a Di Giorgio guitar" (MOREIRA, 2017). The presence of both instruments made the constant transition from one to the other something natural. In the beginning, Juarez reproduced what he heard of popular, classical and jazz music. Informally, he began to take his first steps on the guitar path.

I started playing when I was 12 years old. Studying music was in the late seventies. I never studied with anyone. Except engineering, which I dropped out of last year. As I'm self-taught, I studied a little bit of everything, listening to songs on vinyl records. (MOREIRA, 2015)

According to Juarez, in this process his "teachers" were records by Baden Powell, Luiz Bonfá, Paulinho Nogueira, Z  Menezes, Agust n Barrios, Carlos Barbosa-Lima

playing J. S. Bach, as well as albums by Bossa Nova and the Beatles. However, for Moreira his learning has always been constant and dynamic, with varied influences: "there were several musicians that I met and learned from" (MOREIRA, 2015).

MOVING TO THE CAPITAL OF MINAS GERAIS

Juarez moved to Belo Horizonte in the 70s, to study engineering at UFMG. In the capital, he had the opportunity to meet several musicians who became supporters and partners, such as Toninho Horta, Nivaldo Ornelas, Wagner Tiso, Chiquito Braga. Contact with this generation of musicians, already established in the Belo Horizonte music scene, was decisive for his career.

Juarez highlights that Toninho Horta, Nivaldo Ornelas, Wagner Tiso were the fundamental interactions in defining the musician he became: "I learned from them the taste for harmony, the passion for music, generosity, and that we have to work hard and always" (MOREIRA, 2015).

Toninho Horta, Nivaldo Ornelas, Wagner Tiso, they adopted me, so they called me to play, they put me on the fire because at that time [the beginning of the 70s] the dictatorship caused a very great repression and "self-repression" in the citizen. For a middle-class person to drop everything and go into music [...] it was very difficult (GALILEIA, 2012, p.314).

JUAREZ AND THE COMPOSITION

Juarez began composing in the mid-1970s and, according to his words, composition is a constant in his routine:

I compose regularly. I have around a hundred compositions. I've recorded more than forty. [...]. Composition, in my case, always comes from guitar studies. I'm practicing and suddenly an idea comes to me. (MOREIRA,

Juarez also highlights that his study is daily, almost religious, and is based on works from the classical guitar repertoire, among them `La Catedral` and `Las Abejas`, by Barrios, the Prelude BWV 1004, by J. S. Bach, the Study number: 1, by Villa -Wolves, in addition to works by Garoto.

As his process of creation, composition and arrangement derives from and is closely linked to the instrumental practice of the guitar, his compositions are closely linked to the mechanics of the instrument itself, creating at the same time refined music with guitaristic characteristics.



Ex. 1. Transcription of an excerpt from the song Riva – Recorded on CD RIVA (2010) for solo guitar.



Ex. 2. Transcription of an excerpt from the song Riva – which demonstrates a phrase with guitar idiomaticism through chains of chords.

Juarez highlights that the song Riva was made playing and for playing, thinking about the solo guitar, just like Bom Dia, Baião Barroco and `Você Chegou Sorrindo` (MOREIRA, 2017)

Some works, Juarez highlights, are composed with voice and guitar, initially creating harmony and improvising a melody with the voice or harmonizing a sung melody, thus achieving a different compositional result, as Juarez himself highlights when citing the compositional process of “Diamantina”.



Ex. 3. Transcription of the melody with figured harmony, accompanied by “Diamantina”, album: `Bom dia` (1989/1997) (LOVISI, 2017, p. 218)

This procedure was also used in Samblues, which is a tribute to the bassist idol Jaco Pastorius (1951-1987). A track featured on the 1997 album of the same name, it was initially recorded by Juarez on guitar, accompanied by bass, keyboard and drums and rearranged for solo guitar on the album RIVA (2010).



Ex. 4. Transcription of the melody with coded harmony of the first phrase of “Samblues” from 1997.



Ex. 5. Transcription of the harmonic lead of the first phrase of “Samblues” in the original 1997 recording.

Below we can see the same excerpt presented above in the arrangement for solo guitar made for the 2010 album RIVA where the harmony and melody appear together.

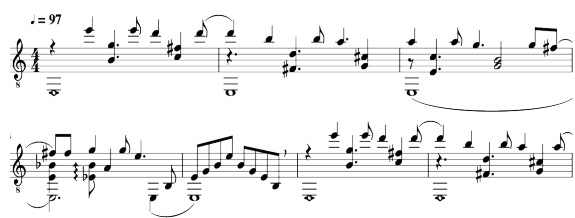


Ex. 6. Transcription Part A of “Samblues”, arrangement for solo guitar, album RIVA (2010)

We can see with the musical examples above, a little of Juarez’s arrangement process, where the guitar starts to accumulate the roles of exposing the melody and performing the

accompaniment.

In *Conversa Comigo Primeiro*, composed in 2006, we can see another example of music that manifests itself through contact with the instrument. This song comes from introspection, characteristic of the speaker Juarez Moreira. “I’m an agitated person, as opposed to my music, calm” (Moreira, 2015). The composer reports on the creation process. “This song came from playing the guitar, on those days when you play relaxed, affectionately, freely, without worrying about form, etc... and the guitar responds to the affection” (MOREIRA, 2015)



Ex. 7. Transcription of the beginning of “Conversa Comigo Médio” where we can observe the exploration of open strings, natural harmonics and idiomatic guitar procedures.

Another characteristic of Juarez Moreira’s performance and composition is to present variations when a phrase is presented again. We can see in the bass example in *ossia* the development of the material in the second presentation of the phrase from “Valsa para Maria” in the solo guitar version of the 2010 album *RIVA*.



Ex. 8. Variation presented in *Waltz for Mary* (c. 17 to 21)

Juarez also highlights that accompanying singers was a great learning experience for

his work as a composer, helping a lot with his rhythmic precision and ability to fill spaces with the guitar, simulating a double bass and a piano, thus creating a more complete accompaniment like “a band of jazz” (MOREIRA, 2017), as he heard on records and in shows. He developed this technique by creating differences in intensity and timbres for the voices proposed in his accompaniments, a characteristic carried over to solo pieces in which we can often perceive three distinct planes: the bass, the harmonic filling with central voices and the main melody, being This often changes position and is not restricted to the high voice. He also cites the influence of Bill Evans with his chord chains, voice leading and his chord melody². (MOREIRA, 2015)

Furthermore, Juarez highlights the freedom and originality that the absence of formal musical instruction provides to the musician: “self-teaching allows the musician, in most cases, to create a very original style” (MOREIRA,2015).

MILESTONES IN YOUR CAREER

An important milestone in Moreira’s career was the Minas Gerais instrumental group “Vera Cruz”, formed by him, Yuri Popoff, Mauro Rodrigues, José Namem and Neném. However, Juarez considers that his professional debut occurred when he joined maestro Wagner Tiso’s instrumental group in 1978, shortly before abandoning his engineering course. With Wagner Tiso, he went on several tours, playing alongside names such as Maria Betânia, Paulo Moura, Milton Nascimento, Nivaldo Ornelas, Lô Borges, Beto Guedes, among others.

In 1985, his song “Diamantina” was recorded by Toninho Horta on the album “Diamond Land”, in which Juarez participated. The following year, he went to New York where

2. Chord Melody consists of playing with the fingers of the left hand, both the harmony and the melody of a song or theme.

he frequented the city's jazz scene, playing with different musicians in shows and jams, being able to experience another musical reality and new professional dynamics. In addition to New York, where he lived for 7 months, he was in Los Angeles, where he "played on the Brazilian circuit" (MOREIRA 2017), Brazilian music venues, and on the jazz circuit:

In the USA I could see several musicians who were already famous working, day after day, without the glamor that we think exists. This really impacted me: seeing what it really is like, that it is daily work, what matters is not arriving, but the journey every day. (MOREIRA, 2017).

In 1989, he released his first album, "Bom Dia", in Brazil, which featured André Dequech, Paulo Moura, Toninho Horta, Zeca Assumpção and Esdras Ferreira (Neném). Album that presents only his own compositions, including themes that would become some of his best-known compositions: "Baião Barroco" and "Diamantina".

The track "Baião Barroco" was used as a vignette on a TV channel in Belo Horizonte, which further contributed to its popularity in Minas Gerais³.

In 2000, with production by Nivaldo Ornellas, Juarez participated in the project "Quadros Modernos", which brought together three of the greatest guitarists from Minas Gerais, together with Toninho Horta and Chiquito Braga. Released in 2001, the album "Quadros Modernos" became a landmark for the Minas Gerais guitar. A work entirely dedicated to instrumental music for guitar, where guitarists, guitarists and composers performed fifteen songs, all their own compositions, played in arrangements for duo, trio or in solo performances.

From 2005 onwards, Juarez became part of the curatorship of FIV – Belo Horizonte

International Guitar Festival with the idea of creating an event that could bring guitarists and guitarists from all four corners of the world to the city and promote instrumental music in the city, through shows, concerts, lectures and master classes, a festival that already has 9 editions.

In 2007, Juarez participated in the documentary "Violões de Minas" which was written and directed by the composer, guitarist, arranger and music producer, Geraldo Vianna and tells the story of the guitar in Minas Gerais. The documentary puts on stage, speaking and playing, names representing the Minas Gerais guitar from a period that goes from the 1930s to the present day. Participants included Chiquito Braga, Juarez Moreira, Toninho Horta, José Lucena, Teodomiro Goulart, Fernando Araújo, Beto Lopes and Wilson Lopes, Gilvan de Oliveira, Aliéksey Vianna, Dirceu Cheib, Renato Sampaio and Vergílio Lima.

In 2010, Juarez Moreira released the album RIVA (his father's nickname), his most intimate and chamber work. The album contains 12 of his own compositions that are presented for solo guitar, some of these works had already been recorded by Juarez in other works with different formations and some were originally recorded on guitar. The themes Waltz para Maria, Samblues, Século 20 and Choro para Piazzolla had already been recorded by the composer himself.

[...] I make a living from playing, performing and recording. I give master classes, but my activity is playing. I study every day; a lot and I compose. I always have plans for new work and tours. I see this work as something of dedication, every day. (MOREIRA, 2017)

3. "TV Alterosa" used "Baião Barroco" as a vignette in its programming. The arrangement of Juarez's theme can be seen at the link <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aL7eNYrw4Sk>> and at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HAEh9evGkw>>. Accessed on: 01/03/2017.

THE ELECTRIC GUITAR

Juarez highlights that both he, Toninho, and Chiquito have always played guitar and acoustic guitar, “Not every guitarist plays guitar and vice versa. And by chance, this profile of playing both instruments are appearing again” (MOREIRA, 2017)

Regarding the electric guitar, Juarez says that there has always been this “love relationship” with the instrument, as he started playing guitar and electric guitar together, and adapted the guitar’s right-hand technique to the guitar, just like Joe Pass, Jorge Benson, Wes Montgomery and Jeff Beck, which the musician highlights as his greatest references on the instrument.

The guitar and the acoustic guitar are two totally different entities, they are two different CPFs, the only similarity is that they have six strings. The guitar is a land instrument, ancestral, Iberian, the guitar is an asphalt instrument, post industrial revolution, which generate completely different behavioral attitudes. (MOREIRA, 2017)

Juarez reports that in the 70s, American music had a great influence on Brazilian music, and that many people had their greatest aesthetic references “looking outside Brazil” (MOREIRA, 2017). The biggest name in guitar at that time was Jimi Hendrix, who everyone revered, “For everyone at that time, Jimi

Hendrix broke all barriers, broke everything, you understand? It was the reference of the new. “(MOREIRA, 2017)

Jimi Hendrix, that sensation, a great musician. With that iconoclasm of his. It’s a really cool deal, right? But I was listening to Baden Powell, Toninho Horta, Helio Delmiro. “(MOREIRA, 2017)

Juarez, looking back, reflects that in the sense of innovation and iconoclasm “Baden Powell was my Jimi Hendrix, because everything Hendrix represented for most guitarists, Baden represented for me. “(MOREIRA, 2017).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Through this article and the video “Juarez Moreira and a brief musical history”, we seek to present a closer look at the life and work of this important composer-performer from Minas Gerais. We present unpublished material produced through interviews for this work and published in this article and in the video for 3a “Nas Nuvens”. We found that his compositions are closely linked to the instrumental practice of guitar and electric guitar, and that his works arise from direct contact with the instrument and we highlight a little of his musical trajectory, his influences and main partnerships. We tried to show a little of his vision as a composer and performer and his attitude towards his career.

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RIVA: Juarez Moreira (Compositor). Juarez Moreira (Interprete). (Violão). Brasil. Gravadora Beso Brasil, ano 2010. 1 CD.

SAMBLUES: Juarez Moreira (Compositor). Juarez Moreira (Interprete). (Violão/Guitarra). Brasil. Independente, ano 1997. 1 CD.

ANNEX A - TRANSCRIPTION OF THE VIDEO INTERVIEW “JUAREZ MOREIRA AND A BRIEF MUSICAL HISTORY”

Engenho Studio, Belo Horizonte, 10/14/2017

Juarez Moreira - I come from a family of musicians, as my father liked to say, dilettantes.

My grandfather comes from a Spanish ancestry. Cultivated music at home.

Mine was a guitarist, as he himself said, a dilettante, but he played the guitar very well, Dilermando Reis, and he had a very beautiful sound.

My uncle was a guitar virtuoso, William Moreira. He even played for Ary Barroso, for Tom Jobim, for Bonfá...

My brother, Celso Moreira, you know, is a musician here on the scene.

It wasn't part of our lives to be a professional musician. In the context of the dictatorship, people did not choose their profession.

Dropping the engineering course, which was foolhardy at the time, with two subjects left to graduate in the last semester. It's because? Oh, are you crazy? Yes I may be crazy.

You have to fight for the things you like. And you only live life once.

Then? So, I am extremely happy to have made the right choice for me. Because without music I would be nothing.

We listened to Bonfá, Paulinho Nogueira, Baden Powell, Garoto, Zé Menezes, Laurindo Almeida. And we listened to Bossa Nova, Luiz Eça, Tom Jobim, my biggest idol! And at the same time, I listened to Roberto Carlos and Erasmo, which I think is brilliant! I adore!

Dad also really liked Dilermando Reis, those beautiful waltzes, that kind of thing. I mean, a world full of culture, like that, you know? Afterwards, having contact with modern jazz, Miles Davis, we listened to Wes Montgomery, George Benson...

“I was” always around, in this part with Toninho Horta, next to Toninho Horta, it was very important to see that wonderful guitar of his and the person as well. That he hugged us. Toninho Horta, Nivaldo Ornelas, Wagner Tiso, understand? I met Milton too, there was a time when Milton Nascimento was very generous, he took me one day to see Tom Jobim.

This composition thing, which you mentioned here, I played Tom Jobim, emblematically, to define more or less where I come from.

Composition, funny enough, was something that appeared in life by accident like that. I mean, I always liked playing other people's songs on the guitar. I took Baden Powell, Paulinho Nogueira, Bonfá. I also took piano records, listened to orchestras.

(Gustavo Bracher) - And everything taken by ear?

(Juarez Moreira) - Paulinho Nogueira, and everything. And then, a lot of music making, I had a huge desire to make music. And I took it, and sometimes I committed some things. I was doing something here. One day I was doing it like this, right, I did...

The music of ``Clube da Esquina`` also had a huge influence on the way we produced it. They are very good songs. That thing. Because it was already something beyond Bossa Nova and “the thing”. And he mixed rock n' roll with jazz, progressive rock, classical, jazz harmony and.

At that time, everyone understood the guitar as if they played the guitar with a pick. But there were guitarists who didn't play with a pick.

Oh, you're not a guitarist because you don't play with a pick. Oh, I said it; One minute!

Jeff Beck plays with his hands, Joe Pass...

Jimi Hendrix, that sensation, a great musician. With that iconoclasm of his. It's a really cool deal, right? But I was listening to Baden Powell, Toninho Horta, Hélio Delmiro.

The "Riva" was made to play. "Good Morning" too. The "Baroque Baião" is also solo, right...