

Paula Morelenbaum

Country: Brasil

Genre: bossa nova/electronica

Representation: Spain



Antonio Carlos Jobim used to say that his group, Nova Banda, was made up of five beautiful girls, five handsome guys and a dirty old man. Paula Morelenbaum was one of these girls and her husband, Jaques, one of the boys. In the period 1984-1994, Paula toured around the world with Jobim – Brazil, Japan, Europe, Canada, U.S – performing at prestigious venues such as the Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City, being also featured in the following albums by Jobim: Passarim, Antonio Brasileiro, Tom Jobim – Inédito and Tom canta Vinicius.

It all started four years earlier (1980) as a member of vocal ensemble Céu da Boca, whose lineup was Paula Morelenbaum, Maucha Adnet, Verônica Sabino, Marcia Ruiz, Rosa Lobo, Lidia Sacharny, Ronald Valle, Dalmo Medeiros, Chico Adnet, Paulo Malaguti and Paulo Brandão. The group released the albums Céu da Boca (1981) and Baratotal (1982), having performed extensively in Brazil for five years.

In 1989, besides touring and performing with Antonio Carlos Jobim, she is also featured as singer/actress in the musical production Lamartine para inglês ver, directed by Antonio de Bonis, in the company of singers/actors Vera Holtz, Guida Vianna, Fábio Junqueira and Paulo Andrade.

In 1991, the Rio-born singer Paula Morelenbaum is featured in the album Amazonas / Família Jobim as a member of Nova Banda. She performs in American jazz clubs, including the famous Birdland, in NYC.

The year 1992 marked the release of her first solo album, Paula Morelenbaum (Camerati), produced by Jaques Morelenbaum, also featured as musician and arranger. Paula is accompanied by Daniel Jobim (keyboards), Felipe Poli (acoustic/electric guitars), Igor Eça (bass), Domenico Lancellotti (drums), Luiz Jakka (percussion). The album contains songs written by Gilberto Gil, Chico Buarque, Caetano Veloso, Rita Lee, Arrigo Barnabé, Paulo Jobim, José Miguel Wisnik, George Gershwin, Vinicius de Moraes and Antonio Carlos Jobim, who sings and plays in one of the tracks. The album obtained the 1994 Sharp Brazilian Music Award in the category 'Pop-Rock Revelation'.

In 1993, she is featured in Songbook Vinicius de Moraes and Songbook Dorival Caymmi, producer Almir Chediak.

In 1994, Paula Morelenbaum toured Brazil presenting a musical show titled Chica-chica-boom-chic – contemporary re-readings of Carmen Miranda's songs in arrangements created by Paula.

In the late '90s, she integrated the critically acclaimed Quarteto Jobim-Morelenbaum together with her husband Jaques, Jobim's son, Paulo, and his son, Daniel – a vocal/instrumental chamber music quartet whose repertoire and arrangements are based on Antonio Carlos Jobim's musical legacy.

In 1995, Paula Morelenbaum is featured in Ryuichi Sakamoto's album Smoochy, in Almir Chediak's Songbook Chico Buarque and in Antonio Pinto's movie soundtrack Menino Maluquinho, director Helvécio Raton.

The year 1996 marks the birth of her daughter Dora, but Paula happily manages to combine motherly cares with artistic activities.

In 1999, the group recorded a self-titled album, Quarteto Jobim-Morelenbaum (Velas/Sony Music). Once again, Paula was gracing concert and festival stages in Brazil, Europe, Asia and the U.S.

In the new century, she provided the vocals for the highly acclaimed trio Morelenbaum2/Sakamoto, teaming her and Jaques with Japanese composer/keyboardist Ryuichi Sakamoto. The group's 2001 debut Casa (Kab/Warner Music Japan/Sony Classical/Universal Music) earned them plaudits from music critics throughout the world, followed by another album, Live in Tokyo 2001 (Warner Music Japan), recorded at the Akasaka Act Theater, in Japan.

In 2002, Paula is back in Tokyo for the concert Get's bossa-nova that also counted with special guests Roberto Menescal, Marcos Valle, Bossacucanova, Paulinho Moska, and Leny Andrade. In this same year, she tours with Morelenbaum2/Sakamoto, promoting the critically acclaimed album Casa in Europe and in the U.S.

This was followed up in 2003 by the release of A Day in New York (Kab/Sony Classical/Universal Music/Warner Music Japan), recorded in NYC in one single day, after the trio's first world tour. The CD earned them the 2004 Tim Brazilian Music Award in the category 'Best Brazilian Music Group'.

The DVD 3 years (Warner Japan) 2003, illustrates the 3-year career of trio Morelenbaum2/Sakamoto with snapshots and excerpts from rehearsals, recordings,

performances and casual, off-the-record moments captured around the world in studios, stages and on the road.

In the same year, Paula is featured as a special guest appearance in the albums *Nossa Bossa* (BMG), produced by Celso Fonseca, and *Conversations* (Noon Productions), recorded in Amsterdam by Dutch group Vander Feen.

In 2004, Paula Morelenbaum released her second solo album, *Berimbaum*, (Mirante/Universal Music/Columbia), a tribute to the 'poet of bossa nova', Vinicius de Moraes. Framed within a modern, electro-acoustic concept, it has garnered warm acceptance both from the public and critics. The album was produced by Paula Morelenbaum in collaboration with Antonio Pinto, Leo Gandelman, Celso Fonseca, Bossacucanova and Beto Villares. For the live performances, Paula invited musicians Dudu Trentin (keyboards/samples), Fernando Caneca (acoustic guitar) and Alex Fonseca (drums/samples). The group has toured in Brazil and in Europe reaping wide acclaim and amassing excellent reviews for the concerts and the CD (released in Brazil, Italy, France, Spain, U.S., Argentina and Chile by Universal Music, in Portugal by Farol Música, and in Japan by Columbia Japan).

Now the time is ripe for Paula to step out on her own and earn her rightful place as one of the premiere interpreters of Brazilian popular music.

The opening track, *Tomara*, was the main musical theme of TV Globo's prime-time soap opera *Começar de novo*, aired in 2004-05.

In May 2005, Paula Morelenbaum promotes the release of *Berimbaum* in New York City with two concerts at Joe's Pub that deserved an enthusiastic review penned by New York Times' critic Jon Pareles. She also presented a concert at the New York Museum of Natural History – an homage to Brazil and to composer Antonio Carlos Jobim – produced by non-governmental organization The Nature Conservancy. In July, Paula is in Italy to promote her latest album, with performances booked in Rome and Palermo. By the end of the month, Paula is performing in a series of eight concerts at the Tokyo Blue Note, this time with Jaques Morelenbaum's special guest participation. In the same year, Paula is featured as a special guest appearance in the album 'Vagabond' (Virgin/EMI) by George Moustaki and in Jaques Morelenbaum's movie soundtrack 'Paid', director Laurence Lamers. Among her most relevant concerts we can emphasize the one produced by the fundraising organization WCF, World Childhood Foundation, in São Paulo, with the presence of Queen Silvia of Sweden that founded it.

The end of this year was crowned by another European tour where Paula could visit other cities, thus expanding the promotion of her album 'Berimbaum'.

Selected Discography:

- BERIMBAUM - Paula Morelenbaum (Mirante / Universal Music / Farol Musica) – 2004
- A DAY IN NEW YORK- Paula Morelenbaum, Jaques Morelenbaum e Ryuichi Sakamoto Morelenbaum 2 /Sakamoto (Kab/ Universal Music/ Sony Classical) - 2003
- LIVE IN TOKYO 2001 - Paula Morelenbaum, Jaques Morelenbaum e Ryuichi Sakamoto Morelenbaum 2 /Sakamoto (Warner Music Japan) - 2001
- CASA - Paula Morelenbaum, Jaques Morelenbaum e Ryuichi Sakamoto Morelenbaum 2 / Sakamoto (Kab/Universal Music) - 2001
- CÉU DA BOCA Grupo Céu da Boca Coleção –Millennium – 20 músicas do século XX (Universal Music) - 2000.

- QUARTETO JOBIM-MORELENBAUM - Quarteto Jobim Morelenbaum (Velas/Sony Music) - 1999
- PAULA MORELENBAUM - Paula Morelenbaum (Independente/Camerati) - 1992
- FAMÍLIA JOBIM - Família Jobim e Nova Banda (MoviePlay/Som Livre) - 1991
- BARATOTAL - Grupo Céu da Boca LP (Polygram) – 1982
- CÉU DA BOCA - Grupo Céu da Boca LP (Polygram) - 1981

International press:

Teasing the Bossa Nova, in a Lilt, Latin Way

Paula Morelenbaum could easily perform as an old-fashioned bossa nova singer. She has the voice: graceful and airy, nonchalant but knowing. And she has the experience, having sung for a decade with the paramount bossa nova composer, Antonio Carlos Jobim. But on her 2004 album "Berimbau" (Universal Music Latino) and on Thursday night at Joe's Pub, she chose a hybrid instead, carrying classic bossa novas into a contemporary realm of samples and electronics. The songs were from Vinicius de Moraes, the poet and occasional composer who collaborated with Jobim and other leading bossa nova songwriters. She was backed by a trio of Brazilian musicians on keyboards, guitar and drums, and the lilt of bossa nova, a subliminal samba, was still the core of the songs. But all around it were other sounds, live and recorded. The set began with the twang of an invisible berimbau, the Bahian percussion instrument (for the Moraes-Baden Powell song "Berimbau"), and throughout her songs Ms. Morelenbaum was joined by sampled Caribbean percussion, by double-time rhythms out of drum-and-bass electronica and by echoes that sent electric-piano chords and her own voice ricocheting through the music. A synthesized wah-wah bubbled up through "Insensatez"; a horn section punctuated "Canto de Ossanha." Ms. Morelenbaum matched the flickering electronic ornaments with suave gestures, as if catching the phantom sounds. Updates and remixes risk sounding more narrowly dated than the original style. But Ms. Morelenbaum's bossa nova transformations didn't force 1960's songs into 21st-century postures. Instead, they wrapped tunes in memories and associations that bossa nova has taken on in the decades since it appeared: its kinship with jazz and its appropriation as lounge music. They teased at bossa nova's roots. When Ms. Morelenbaum sang the word "samba," a strutting samba beat materialized. And they brought out the melancholy undertow in so many of the songs, which glide through confessions of tears and longing. Bossa nova, once elegantly hermetic, wasn't so isolated anymore.

"Berimbau", Paula Morelenbaum – The New York Times, USA, (Jon Pareles) May 2005

Paula Morelenbaum's beautifully subtle delivery marks her as one of the last of the classic bossa nova singers, not least of which because she (and her arranger hubby Jaques) apprenticed with the great man himself, Antonio Carlos Jobim. Her latest disc, Berimbau, finds her exploring a subset of lounge music that could be called bossa-tronica.

'Berimbau', Paula Morelenbaum – TIME OUT, NEW YORK, May 2005

Global Hit

Paula Morelenbaum takes classic bossa nova tracks and updates them with an interesting multi-person lineup of producers. Her husband Jacques Morelenbaum is a cellist. He plays on a few tracks here, and also does string arrangements.(...) And that's what is great about Paula Morelenbaum's solo album, "Berimbau." She covers classic bossa nova songs, all with lyrics and by Vinicius de Moraes. But this time she and her producers tastefully color outside the lines in her homage to Mr. Moreas. There is Hammond B3 organ on some tunes, creative instrumentation, and Paula's very thoughtful twists on classic bossa nova, but it's never over the top. The perfect example of this is the composition "Insensatez."

"Berimbau", Paula Morelenbaum – The World, (Marco Werman) May 2005

This Is the Sound of Globalization

...Ms. Morelenbaum, who sang for a decade with the bossa nova titan Antonio Carlos Jobim, sends bossa novas and sambas into an electronic hall of mirrors on "Berimbaum." It's a collection of songs by the poet and songwriter Vinicius de Moraes, and her nonchalant voice is backed by a mixture of live musicians and samples that go ricocheting between lounge music and breakbeats, often multiplying into precise echoes. Bebel Gilberto has also been exploring this zone of electro-bossa, but Ms. Morelenbaum and her crafty producers have plenty to add.
'Berimbaum', Paula Morelenbaum – The New York Times, USA (Jon Pareles) April 2005

Paula Morelenbaum was the favorite singer of bossa nova's natural father – composer and pianist Antonio Carlos Jobim. Paula graces the highly sophisticated Quarteto Jobim-Morelenbaum together with Jobim's son and grandson, and her husband Jaques. Paula is at the heart of the project Morelenbaums2/Sakamoto, one of the brightest bossa-nova experiments, a model of esthetic exchange between Brazilian and Japanese musicians. Paula is one of Brazil's most beautiful and sensuous voices. This time, she drifts away from the universe of Jobim to take a dive into the world of Vinicius de Moraes – an alter ego of the composer/pianist, the poet-paradigm of bossa nova. But she goes further than usual, opening herself up to electronic devices, programmers, remixes and samples. Over a synthesized groundwork produced by Bossacucanova, Alex Fonseca or Antonio Pinto, her voice circulates fresh and clear in the company of Leo Gandelman's sax, of the guitars played by Celso Fonseca, Luiz Brasil and Nico Resende, the percussions by Sidinho, the berimbau by Marcelo Costa, and the voices of Vinicius de Moraes himself and his daughter Luciana. A bossa-nova carousel that starts gentle and cool with Tomara, ending on a joyful note with O nosso amor. In one hour's time Paula manages to make us forget about Maria Creuza (an excellent interpreter of the Vinicius de Moraes songbook), accomplishing a true experiment in sound.
"Berimbaum", Paula Morelenbaum – LE MONDE DE LA MUSIQUE, France, (Francisco Cruz), January 2005.

...The decade Paula Morelenbaum spent with Jobim also allowed her an intimate acquaintance with the lyrics of Vinicius de Moraes, one of Brazil's iconic songwriters. (...) Songs like "Primavera," "Berimbau" and "Brigas Nunca Mais" retain their essential vibe, but Morelenbaum and her musical cohorts impart a decidedly post-modern spin to the material by using rhythm programming, loops and tasty bits of sampling. It's a sweet idea, made all the more appealing by Morelenbaum's vocals, which virtually define the deliciously hot/cool paradox of Brazilian pop and jazz. "Berimbaum" is electronica in the reverent and very hip service of legendary bossa nova, and the results are definitely danceable.
'Berimbaum', Paula Morelenbaum – Billboard, USA (P VV) November 2004

A pupil of Jobim and her Afro-Electro Vinicius de Moraes

...Paula Morelenbaum has just released a great solo album, where she found a perfect balance between the acoustic and the electronic, the classic and the modern, exploring an excellent repertoire written by Vinicius de Moraes. Counting with brilliant producers like Antonio Pinto, Celso Fonseca and the guys from Bossacucanova, Paula Morelenbaum exudes musical elegance and good taste with her perfectly tuned voice floating over an electronic ground, where the deftly played acoustic instruments are set in an ambience of wonderful arrangements. Definitely, a great disc.
'Berimbaum', Paula Morelenbaum – Sintonia Fina, Brazil (Nelson Motta) August 2004