



GCSE Music – Set Work 8 – Samba Em Preludio

A: Esperanza Spalding

- Esperanza Spalding was born in Portland, Oregon, USA in 1984.
- After leaving school she developed a love for the bass and concentrated on this instrument as well as her singing.
- She became the singer of an indie band called Noise for Pretend for whom she wrote songs.
- She attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, where she studied double bass. After graduating at the age of 20, she was asked to stay on as an instructor.
- She then formed a jazz trio with whom she recorded her album Junjo in 2006. This was mostly instrumental but showcased her abilities on the bass.
- She went on to release Esperanza in 2008 from which the set work is taken, Chamber Music Society in 2010 and Radio Music Society in 2012.
- She sings and plays double bass, electric bass, guitar and acoustic bass guitar, the instrument that she plays in the set work.
- She sings in English, Spanish and Portuguese and has a particular love for the music of Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken.
- She won a Grammy Award in 2011 for Best New Artist, the first time a jazz musician had done so. She has since gone on to win other Grammy awards in other categories.

B: Samba Em Preludio

- This set work is a cover of a song written by Roberto Baden Powell de Aquino and Vinicius de Moraes. It was originally intended as a love song performed as a duet between a man and a woman.
- The 'em' is Portuguese for 'in'.
- This piece is not really Samba, but is in a style called Bossa Nova that is closely related to Samba.
- Bossa Nova is a fusion of Brazilian Samba and American Jazz.
- The style developed in the late 1950s but in 1964, Bossa Nova gained a widespread popularity.
- The style is essentially a slowed down version of Samba, with a slowed down version of the Samba rhythm.
- Bossa Nova was often performed by a soloist accompanying themselves on nylon- string guitar, although the piano, organ, double-bass and drums were also frequently used.
- The self accompanied examples also featured a return to a Brazilian folk song style of vocal delivery, which was much more nasal and subdued that was the case with Samba.
- In this set work, the guitar playing is clearly influenced by Flamenco (traditional Spanish) guitar styles

C: DR SMITTH

D ynamics	No dynamic markings.		I nstrumentation	The instrumentation is stripped back. This is similar to the more mellow Bossa Nova tracks of the early 1960s. Female vocal Acoustic bass guitar Nylon-string acoustic guitar
R hythm	Bossa Nova rhythm, but this is implied rather than clearly stated in any one part. Free Metre At Bar 4, music feels like 4/4		T exture	The piece begins with a bass guitar solo. It is, however, monophonic only at the start of the first bar and the end of the third bar as the open strings are left to ring in the rest of the passage. The voice enters in bar 4. The bass alternates between a chordal accompaniment and counterpoint with the melody line. The texture briefly increases to three parts during the instrumental starting at bar 55 (not on the score). It is likely that one guitar part was overdubbed during recording. The texture drops to the two part texture of vocal and bass at the start of verse 3. This is even sparser than that in verse 1 as the bass is playing fewer notes and no chords.
S tructure	Introduction (bars 1 – 3) Verse 1 (bars 4 – 21) Break (bars 19 - 22) Verse 2 (bars 23 – 54)	Instrumental (bars 55-87) Link (bar 88) Verse 3 (bars 88-104) Coda (bars 105 – end)	T empo	The track starts in free tempo, but it does have a metre - the pulse is pulled around freely, but the music can be readily written in a straightforward time signature. By bar 19, the pulse becomes steady and the instruments lock into the Bossa Nova groove.
M elody	The melody is syllabic throughout the song. This may be because the singer is also playing her bass guitar and so has to concentrate on the bass lines rather than improvising melismatic lines. The bass and voice are working together to create a sense of harmony even though they are (mostly) performing single notes. From verse 2 onwards, the melody contains mostly stepwise movement. The melody often consists of the highest notes of the 7 ^{ths} or of even more extended chords.		T onality H armony	This piece is in the key of B minor. The chords are very rarely simple triads – the main complexity of this set work lies in the use of harmony. Dissonance is common in this piece owing to the complex nature of the jazz chords, but the dissonance is nonetheless controlled, and resolved according to the conventions of jazz harmony.