

# BOSSA

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## GILBERTO GIL "QUANTA LIVE" TOURS THE U.S.

by Márlon Catão, Publisher

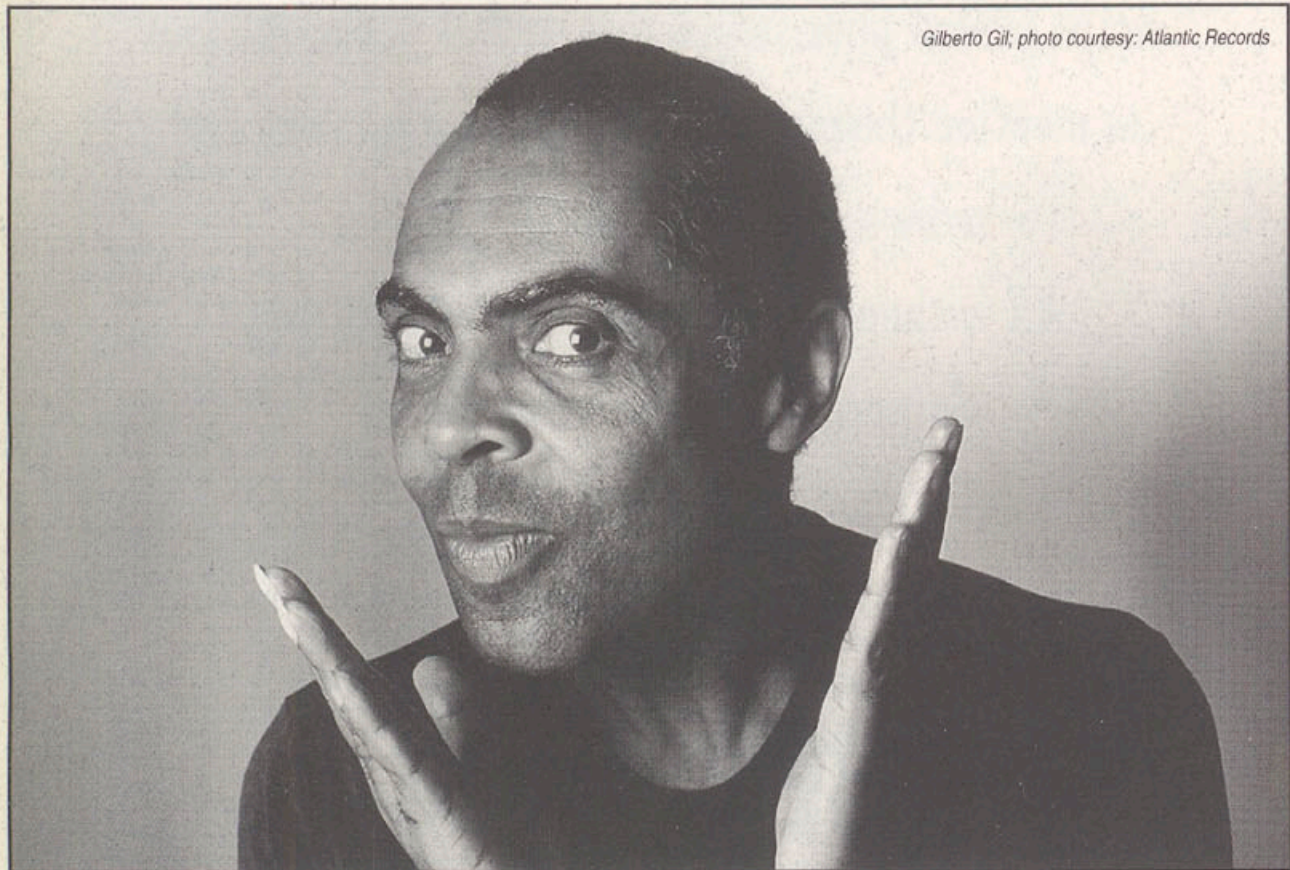
Born in Salvador, the capital of Bahia, a northeastern state in Brazil, in '41, **Gilberto Gil** started his career playing accordion. The instrument became very popular in the '40s and '50s because of **Luiz Gonzaga**, father of *baião*. Gilberto Gil grew up listening to

street music, where *repente*, *baião*, and *forró* were very popular. These styles were often played in open markets around town.

But, with the launch of *bossa nova* in '58,

*Continued on page 8*

*Gilberto Gil; photo courtesy: Atlantic Records*



## GETTING TO KNOW

# GILBERTO GIL

by Kirsten

After waiting, impatiently, for the first group to warm up the crowd at the Othon Palace, the fans were finally getting jumpy. The audience, standing like sardines in the outdoor enclosure behind the five star hotel in Salvador, was ready. There was a sizzle of anticipation in the air. At long last, he was announced. His fans, mostly *baianos*, went wild, building to a crescendo by the time he appeared. Dressed in a white, Indian looking garb, Gilberto Gil made his entrance. Audible, probably, in half of Salvador, the people welcomed one of the great heroes of Brazilian music. He threw his head back and laughed, that hearty, contagious laugh that makes the whole world feel there is a reason to be happy. And, indeed, there was. Sold out long before the concert, the tickets had vanished from the ticket office early, and although Gilberto Gil is a "local boy," he draws crowds just as a rare, out-of-town artist would.

To a foreign visitor, used to a concert hall with seats, the standing room only setting may, at first, appear odd. There is a method to the madness, however. There are no seats because a Brazilian audience dances throughout the duration of the show. In fact, it would not be possible for anyone, Brazilian or not, to stand or sit still for Gilberto Gil. He whips his fans into a frenzy of dancing, gyrating bodies, and when it's all over, the crowd floats away on a cloud of euphoria with the songs still on their minds.

This show was dedicated to his CD *Quanta* as well as the one that was to come out shortly thereafter, *Quanta*

*Gente Veio Ver*, How Many People Came to See, a live recording of the *Quanta* concert. And it was clear that most of the songs were already well known to the audience who sang along on the title song as well as many of the others. One favorite seemed to be the beautiful *Estrela*, Star, which appears on both CD's. Gil supplemented his newest songs with old favorites which made the young *baianos* roar with excitement as soon as the first notes filled them with recognition. The show, which lasted almost two hours, was almost a religious experience, emanating from one of the most talented artists Brazil has ever seen, the *baiano* Gilberto Gil, of whom most Brazilians speak as "o Gil."

On September 5th, Gil starts his new U.S. tour, which spans 14 cities in just 20 days. It is our turn to be in for one of the great treats MPB, Brazilian Popular Music, has to offer. In addition to the Lowell Memorial Auditorium on Saturday, September 18th, he will visit, among other places, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Austin, and Minneapolis.

So who is this man and musician, who recently won the Grammy for best World Music CD for *Quanta Gente Veio Ver*? Someone, who has worked with him for many years in Brazil, recently told me that Gil is the closest to a "zen" person, he has ever met, a gentle, spiritual soul. And a promoter on the west coast, who has worked with him on many occasions, said that he is the closest thing she has ever had to a guru.

One wonders about the road Gilberto Gil took to achieve that kind of karma.



Gilberto Gil; photo: Don Klein

He was born in Salvador in 1942 and spent his childhood in the interior of Bahia in the town of Ituaçu. Gil's early musical influences were as diverse as could be, classical music, jazz, **Luiz Gonzaga**, Portuguese *fados*, Peruvian *Yma Sumac*, and a variety of different dance music. It is not difficult to see how he developed into the experimental and diverse composer that he is. His first foray into music was on the accordion, the most popular instrument in Brazil until **João Gilberto** changed the course of Brazilian music with his rendition of *Chega de Saudade*, No More Blues, playing those odd rhythms that made every Brazilian want to play the guitar.

Having grown up in the house of a doctor, Gilberto Gil was expected to pursue an education and attended Ufba, Universidade Federal da Bahia, majoring in business administration. It was here that he became acquainted with **Caetano Veloso** and his sister, **Maria Bethânia** - a

meeting that would have far reaching consequences. Gil worked for a short time for a multinational company in São Paulo, but he realized early that music was his calling.

Always a political animal, Gil's first recording was of the protest songs *Roda, Wheel*, and *Procissão, Procession*. The late **Elis Regina** and **Jair Rodriguez** recorded his and **Torquato Neto's** song *Louvação, Praise*, in 1966. After that, Gil began to appear regularly on the TV show *O Fino da Bossa*.

Gil and Caetano became close friends as well as collaborators in a new movement, named *Tropicalismo*, a kind of musical cannibalism that sought to absorb influences from all aspects of the world's cultural expressions and synthesizing it into a Brazilian *jeito*, way. **Tom Zé** and **Gal Costa** were integral members of the *Tropicalismo* movement, as well.

Continued on following page

## BRAZIL'S MASTER STORYTELLER READS FROM THE BOOK ON CONCERTIZING

### CAETANO VELOSO IN CONCERT IN LOWELL JULY 10, 1999

by Fred Bouchard

Was the professorial look—tweedy jacket, skinny tie—just a ruse, another magical transformation for The Great Veloso, melodist of mystery? Was it a ploy meant to confound entrenched adherents, including members of the [fifth estate] press, to the lawlessly hip (even if somewhat dated and long-evolved) edicts of *tropicalismo*? No, it was not merely a look, but rather an attitude embracing Caetano's enlightened sense of soft instruction.

Yes, *Livro Vivo* presented Caetano The Teacher, deftly switching roles from choirmaster (leading the largely *brasileiro* audience through their well-memorized *Terra, A Tristeza, Você*), to cheerleader (for band member's solos, especially **Joatan Nascimento's** scorching trumpet), to lecturer (making points from his new book about Brazilian culture), to dance instructor (exhorting even the portly **Jaques Morelenbaum**, cellist/music director, to cut a few capers on How Beautiful Could A Being Be?), rescuing the two-bar ditty from uncharacteristic but potential boredom. He even shone now and then as class clown, rolling his eyes and twirling his guitar and shrugging his shoulders, sage Fool to his own Lear. It doesn't matter what Veloso does for window-dressing: people the world over want to learn lessons in love and life at his knee, by his guitar.

Set One opened with a street parade, as the four young percussionists played snare drums, preceding Veloso singing *Minha Voz, Minha Vida* (his 1968 classic covered by **Gal Costa**) over tight **Miles Davis/Gil Evans** harmonies. As with the album, every track bristled with fresh influences, sounds, rhythms, though many arrangements were transformed. The title tune itself (*Livros*) was much leaner than on disc, without *Os Mutantes'* heavy electrification and more spar-

• GILBERTO GIL, continued from previous page

At a concert in 1968, at which Caetano appeared with the group *Os Mutantes*, The Mutants, who were dressed in plastic clothes and blaring electric guitars, performing his *É Proibido Proibir*, Prohibiting is Prohibited, the military dictatorship's censors, took a closer look at the two friends. Gilberto Gil's *Domingo no Parque*, Sunday in the Park, had a much better reception, but the military began to worry about people who seemingly had nothing but disdain for the established music and way of thinking. Concerned that they might sway young people to think in an undesirable manner, the military arrested Caetano and Gil and imprisoned them for several months. The imprisonment was followed by four months of house arrest and two and a half years of exile in London.

Gilberto Gil developed his interest in the African roots that were his heritage. With his analytical mind, he researched what he could about Africa and joined the *Carnaval bloco Filhos de Gandhi*, Children of Gandhi, of which he is now an important member and leader. In 1977, he attended an arts festival in Lagos, Nigeria, an experience he describes as eye-opening for his own development as an African descendent. He also developed a close friendship with French-born anthropologist, **Pierre Verger**, whose research and books on African religions, are famous. With deep reverence and respect, Gil was working on a documentary film about Pierre Verger and interviewed him one day before his death. The film has since been completed and has been shown on television in Brazil.

Gilberto Gil's lyrics have always been critical of Brazilian society, of the things he sees as injustice. At one time, he even dabbled in politics himself, taking a couple of years off from his music to be the secretary of culture in Salvador.

Continued on page 16

While in prison, Gil started studying yoga, meditation, and macrobiotics. He is still to this day a spiritual person, whose interest in spirituality spans a wide variety of religions and spiritual movements. Since his imprisonment, he has had a great desire to visit India, but music commitments always kept him from realizing his dream. Mother Africa and her spiritual roots are part of his life, and *Yorubá* words constantly appear in his lyrics as well as the names of the *orixás*, African deities. From the rear view mirror in his car hang the multicolored "fitas," ribbons with their inscription "Lembrança do Senhor do Bonfim da Bahia," Remembrance of Senhor do Bonfim of Bahia, Senhor do Bonfim being the most holy of Salvador's 365 churches (one for each day of the year). This is the place where every *baiano* with respect for himself comes to pray for the success of a project or personal quest and give thanks when the quest succeeds.

Gilberto Gil is a phenomenon - an indomitable spirit who keeps re-inventing himself. Born with an incurable curiosity, he is constantly exploring new avenues for his creativity, bursting with energy even as he is on an exhausting tour. His recent Grammy was received with enthusiasm by his friends and associates in Brazil. His "soul brother," Caetano, was ecstatic at his friend's success and praised him. **Chico Buarque**, on a visit to Salvador to attend his grandchildren's baptism, expressed his admiration for Gil, who "works 30 times harder than I." And we, of the United States, are now being given the gift of an evening with this wonderful artist from the North East of Brazil. 🎵

Luiz Simas' *New Chorinhos From Brazil* is a precious gem. The music you hear is a living testimony of an art form that is alive and growing in the hands and minds of artists such as Simas.

• *Água de Moringa: Saracoteando*  
[Strolling] Malandro Records  
MAL 71007 (1999)  
([www.brazilianjazz.com](http://www.brazilianjazz.com))

In the traditional style of Joaquim Antônio da Silva Calado Júnior's *Choro Carioca* group, *Água de Moringa* comes strolling in with a bouncy and lively release entitled *Saracoteando*. If you have been following previous Malandro Records releases, you should be aware that *Saracoteando* is one more gift to music lovers.

*Água de Moringa* is an ensemble of six young musicians who are devoted to perpetuating this Brazilian musical genre called *choro*. The basic formation is clarinets (**Rui Alvim**), mandolin and tenor guitar (**Marcílio Lopes**), *cavaquinho* (**Jayme Vignoli**), *viola caipira* (**Luiz Flávio Alcofra**), 7-string guitar (**Josimar Carneiro**), and *pandeiro* and drums (**André Boxexa**). The music presented in *Saracoteando* covers classics from Ernesto Nazareth, Pixinguinha, and **Jacob do Bandolim**, as well as music from contemporary composers, such as **Guinga** and **Aldir Blanc**, **Hermeto Pascoal**, and others.

The opening track, Ernesto Nazareth's *Fon-Fon* [Beep-Beep], was originally composed for piano, says Marcílio Lopes. It is a fast-paced *choro* that reminds you of one of those turn-of-



Continued on page 15

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the-century scenes with cars racing down city streets. The dialogue between the bass clarinet and mandolin provides most of the musical basis for this captivating tune. In *Agüenta, Seu Fulgêncio!* [Hold on, Mr. Fulgêncio!], composed by **Lourenço Lamartine**, *Água de Moringa* pays tribute to other masters who recorded this tune previously: Pixinguinha, **Benedito Lacerda**, and Jacob do Bandolim. Again, in a typical *choro* fashion, the mandolin and clarinet take turns in the solo passages. The pace then slows down with Pixinguinha's waltz *Sensível* [Sensitive] only to pick up again with Jacob do Bandolim's *polka Saracoteando* [Strolling]. As living proof of the long-standing tradition of *choro*, we then hear *Arabiando*, by **Esmeraldino Sales**. This song was awarded 3rd place in the Second National *Choro* Festival organized by Bandeirantes TV network in São Paulo in 1978. Two very fine guests accompany *Água de Moringa* in the next two tracks. **Cristóvão Bastos** adds an accordion solo in his own composition with **Alberto Araújo**, *Retalhos* [Shreds]. The next guest is multi-instrumentalist **Carlos Malta**, the wizard of woodwinds, in a solo of Hermeto Pascoal's *Intocável* [Unplayable].

If at this point you are still unconvinced of how good *choro* is and what *Água de Moringa* is capable of accomplishing, brace yourself for *Canhoto da Paraíba's Com Mais de Mil* [Faster than a Speeding Bullet]. Ary Vasconcelos explains in his book, *Carinhoso Etc.: História e Inventário do Choro* (Gráfica Editora do Livro, 1984), that this tune was written with the sole intention of challenging the most experienced accompanist. **Canhoto da Paraíba**, a strong influence on **Paulinho**

**da Viola**, is said to have written this piece basing his chord progression on the Brazilian northeastern *violeiros* [players of a Brazilian folk guitar]. Closing this astounding collection of classic and contemporary *choros*, **Guerra-Peixe's Suíte Nordestina** [Northeastern Suite] is played exuberantly.

*Choros* can be energetic and mellow. They convey images through sound and emotions through rhythm. *Água de Moringa* will captivate and inspire you through timeless melodies of an everlasting Brazilian art form. 🎵

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ling drums, including the seething, driving traps of **Ronaldo Silva**, son and colleague of the famed **Robertinho**, **Milton Nascimento's** drummer for a quarter century.

There were little history lessons: a smooth, respectful *Meditação* paid a gorgeously orchestral salute to **Tom Jobim**. As an intermission,

Caetano went confidential with a little solo guitar suite of two little-known beauties, **Chico Buarque's** *Carolina* and **Manoel Pinto's** *Sozinho*. Professor Veloso went so far as to deliver a brief history of dodecaphonics, with reference to **Papa Arnold Schoenberg**, before delving into *Doideca*, his wacky, hip-hoppy, twelve-tone jig-saw puzzle.

Set Two opened with a stretch version of the elegant *Manhatã*, which he explained evoked his feelings of "subversive panamericanism." Among other highlights were two *tour-de-force* tenor ballads from his Spanish album (one of them the heady *Lamento Borincano*); the improbable but highly effective American pop hit *Diana* (**Paul Anka**, 1958), and a blustery, brassy version (possibly more magisterial than the album's) of **Ary Barroso's** '40s hit known as *Bahia*.

Though *Livro's* texts are wordy, elaborate, detailed exegeses on life and art, Caetano put their messages over like any good teacher does—with minimum apparent effort and maximized joy. The singer achieved an even higher power of charm, grace, and delightfully puckish mannerisms than Boston saw at his Jordan Hall premiere at two years ago. Total rapport was the key here. Veloso knew it was a home-crowd: as he introduced each band member, he told a funny anecdote about each and indicated whether he was *carioca*, *bahiano*, or *paulista*—to appropriate hoots and hollers.

This starry-eyed audience made it vociferously evident that they were ready to listen to the man sing all night long. When they demanded encores, Veloso gave them three: the last, *Pra Ninguém*,

## BRAZILIAN RADIO PROGRAMS

### THIRD SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH

• Fresco, CA	2pm	91.5 KSJV	Brasil Musical	Ricardo-Amarina Pugh
• Bakersfield CA	2pm	90.1 KTOX	Brasil Musical	Ricardo-Amarina Pugh
• Modesto/Stockton CA	2pm	88.7 KMPO	Brasil Musical	Ricardo-Amarina Pugh
• El Centro CA	2pm	89.0 KUBO	Brasil Musical	Ricardo-Amarina Pugh
• Salinas CA	2pm	90.5 KHDC	Brasil Musical	Ricardo-Amarina Pugh

### SUNDAY

• San Juan PR	9pm	92.5 Radio Oro	Desafinado	Roberto Leith
• Ann Arbor MI	9pm	88.3 WCBN	Brazilian Connection	Dan Rosenberg
• Boston MA	8am	91.5 WMFO	Remix Brazil	Beto Barbosa
• Boston MA	12pm	88.1 WMBR	Brazilian Style	Márlon Catão
• Boston MA	3pm	88.9 WERS	Terra Brasilis	Leonardo Cioglia
• Cupertino CA	6pm	91.5 KKUP	Canta Brazil	David Heyman Maria José & Xuxu
• Denver CO	4pm	89.3 KUVO	Brazilian Fantasy	Cenir Arruda
• Glen Ellyn IL	10pm	90.9 WDCB	Jazz Tropicale	Marshall Vente
• Miami FL	6pm	93.9 WLVE	Brazilian Love Jazz	Gina Martell
• Philo CA	3pm	90.7 KZYX	One Ocean	Lilia Lobo Albuquerque
• Sacramento CA	11pm	101.9 KSSJ	Sounds of Brazil	Scott Adams
• San Francisco CA	12am	103.7 KKSF	A Taste of Brazil	Dick Conte

### MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

• Framingham MA	9pm	1200 AM WKOX	Balança Brasil	Lourival Nascimento
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### TUESDAYS

• San Juan PR	9am	89.7 WRPU	Brasil en Música	Carlos Camuñas
• Berkeley CA	9pm	90.7 KALX	The Death of College Radio	Joe Sixpack

### WEDNESDAYS

• New York NY	11pm	89.9 WKCR	Som do Brasil	Jassvan de Lima-Eduardo Delgado
• Santa Cruz CA	9am	88.1 KLSC	Brasileirinho	Renato Frota

### FRIDAYS

• Austin TX	1pm	90.5 KUT	Horizontes	Michael Crocket
• Boston MA	10am	91.5 WMFO	Brazilian Style of Music	Márlon Catão
• San Francisco CA	8pm	90.3 KUSF	Só da Brasil	Jorge Lima-Simone Odom

### SATURDAYS

• Bellingham WA	9pm	91.7 KZAZ	do Brasil	Joel Litwin
• Bellevue WA	2pm	91.3 KBCS	Raízes	Samia Panni-Paula Maya
• Los Angeles CA	9am	88.9 KXLU	Brazilian Hour	Sérgio Mielniczenko
• Los Angeles CA	1pm	90.7 KPFK	Sounds of Brazil	Sérgio Mielniczenko
• New Orleans LA	2pm	90.7 WWOZ	Tudo Bem	Katrina Geenen
• San Juan PR	8pm	89.7 WRPU	Brasil en Música	Carlos Camuñas

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Cactano's personal litany of great *sambistas* singing their favorites, ends on a deliciously simple homage that offers a telling insight into his musical philosophy: that nothing is better than listening to João Gilberto than pure si-

lence. And the rest was—a standing roar for what seemed hours. There was not a soul there who did not hope for a return engagement—possibly thinking, “What will Cactano do to top himself in the millennium?” 🎵

## BRAZILIAN CONCERTS & EVENTS

### Orisha Brazilian Dance - Isaura Oliveira

• Every 2nd & last Mon., 7:30pm Abizaid Arts Center 107 Grand St., New York NY +1 212 941-8480

### Wayne Wilentz Trio

• Every Tue., 9:30pm Cafe Lautrec 18th St., and Belmont NW, Washington DC

• Every Thu., 9:30pm U-topia

1418 U St. NW, Washington DC

### Afro Brazilian Dance - Isaura Oliveira

• Every Wed., 6pm Dance Complex 536 Mass Av., Cambridge MA +1 617 776-9620

• Every Sat., 1pm Dance Complex 536 Mass Av., Cambridge MA +1 617 776-9620

### Capoeira Lessons

• Every Thu., 6pm Dance Complex 536 Mass Av., Cambridge MA +1 617 776-9620

### Karana

• Every Thu. & Sat., 9pm Old Firehouse 251 Hampshire St., Cambridge MA +1 617 492-7232

### Brazilian Night - Disco

• Every Thu., 10pm Tratoria Il Panino 295 Franklin St., Boston MA +1 617 338-1000

### Aluá

• Every Thu., 8:30pm Sotto Cinque 417 Third Ave., New York NY +1 212 685-2037

• Every Sat., Panorama Cafe 1640 Second Ave., New York NY +1 212 288-6868

### Samba Reggae - HipHop - Isaura Oliveira

• Every Fri., 4pm Spontaneous Celebration 45 Danforth St., Jamaica Plain MA +1 617 524-6373

### Popular Brazilian Dances & Songs - Isaura Oliveira

• Every Fri., 6pm Spontaneous Celebration 45 Danforth St., Jamaica Plain MA +1 617 524-6373

### Brazilian Live Music

• Every Fri., 9pm Ryles Jazz Club 212 Hampshire St., Cambridge MA +1 617 876-9330

### Brazilian Night

• Every Sat., 10pm Holiday Inn Washington St., Somerville MA +1 617 471-5524

### Joe Carter Brazilian Jazz Duo

• Every Sun., 12pm The Bank St. Brewing Company 65 Bank St., Stamford CT +1 203 325-2739

### Brazilian Live Music

• Every Sun., 8pm Sky Bar 510 Somerville Ave., Somerville MA +1 617 623-5223

### Brazilian Night - Disco

• Every Sun., 10pm Venu 100 Warrenton St., Boston MA +1 617 325-7357

### Gilberto Gil "Quanta Live"

• Sept. 5 Aspen Festival Aspen CO

• Sept. 7 Fox Theatre Boulder CO

• Sept. 8 Gothic Theatre Denver CO

• Sept. 10 Maritime Hall San Francisco CA

Continued on page 19

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• **CONCERTS & EVENTS, Continued from page 17**

• Sept. 11	Street Scene Festival	San Diego CA	
• Sept. 12	Hollywood Bowl	Los Angeles CA	
• Sept. 14	Irving Plaza	New York NY	
• Sept. 15	Lisner Auditorium	Washington DC	
• Sept. 17	Flynn Theatre	Burlington VT	
• Sept. 18	Lowell Memorial Auditorium	50 E. Merrimack St., Lowell MA	+1 978 454-2299
• Sept. 21	Northrop Auditorium	Minneapolis MN	
• Sept. 23	La Zona Rosa	Austin TX	
• Sept. 24	House of Blues	New Orleans LA	
• Sept. 25	Gusman Theatre	Miami FL	
<b>Terra Samba</b>			
• Sept. 5, 12pm	Brazilian Festival	46th St., New York NY	
• Sept. 6, 9pm	The Roxy	279 Tremont St., Boston MA	+1 617 783-4858
<b>Raising of the Brazilian Flag (Opening of the Brazilian Independence Day Festival)</b>			
• Sept. 7, 12pm	Boston City Hall		+1 617 542-4000
<b>Children's Theatre "A Truinha do Sítio do Pica-Pau Amarelo na Terra da Gramática" (Brazilian Independence Day Festival)</b>			
• Sept. 7, 7pm	Coolidge Corner Theatre	290 Harvard St., Brookline MA	+1 617 734-2500
<b>Movie "Outras Estórias" (Brazilian Independence Day Festival)</b>			
• Sept. 8, 7pm	Coolidge Corner Theatre	290 Harvard St., Brookline MA	+1 617 734-2500
<b>Independence Party - Out of Doors (Brazilian Independence Day Festival)</b>			
• Sept. 12, 12pm	Magazine Beach	Memorial Drive, Cambridge MA	+1 617 491-5480
<b>Kátia Moraes</b>			
• Sept. 10 & 11	La Ve Lee	Studio City CA	+1 818 980-8158
• Sept. 16	Mamagaya	W. Hollywood CA	+1 310 659-4999
• Sept. 25	San Juan Capistrano Mission	Orange Country CA	+1 949 248-2048
<b>Marshall Vente &amp; Tropicale</b>			
• Sept. 12, 7pm	Aboard the Tall Ship, a 148' Schooner	Chicago IL	+1 312 595-5472
<b>Olodum</b>			
• Sept. 26, 9pm	The Roxy	279 Tremont St., Boston MA	+1 617 325-7357
<b>Carlos Malta &amp; Trio da Paz</b>			
• Oct. 7, 8 & 10pm	Scullers Jazz Club @ DoubleTree Hotel	400 Soldiers Field Rd., Boston MA	+1 617 562-4111
• Oct. 12	The Knitting Factory	New York NY	
• Oct. 16 & 17	Snug Harbor	New Orleans	
<b>Aluá</b>			
• Oct. 23, 3pm	Mazur Theatre	555 E. 90th St., New York NY	+1 718 268-9670

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
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# Gilberto Gil

## "Quanta Live"

September 18, 9pm at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium

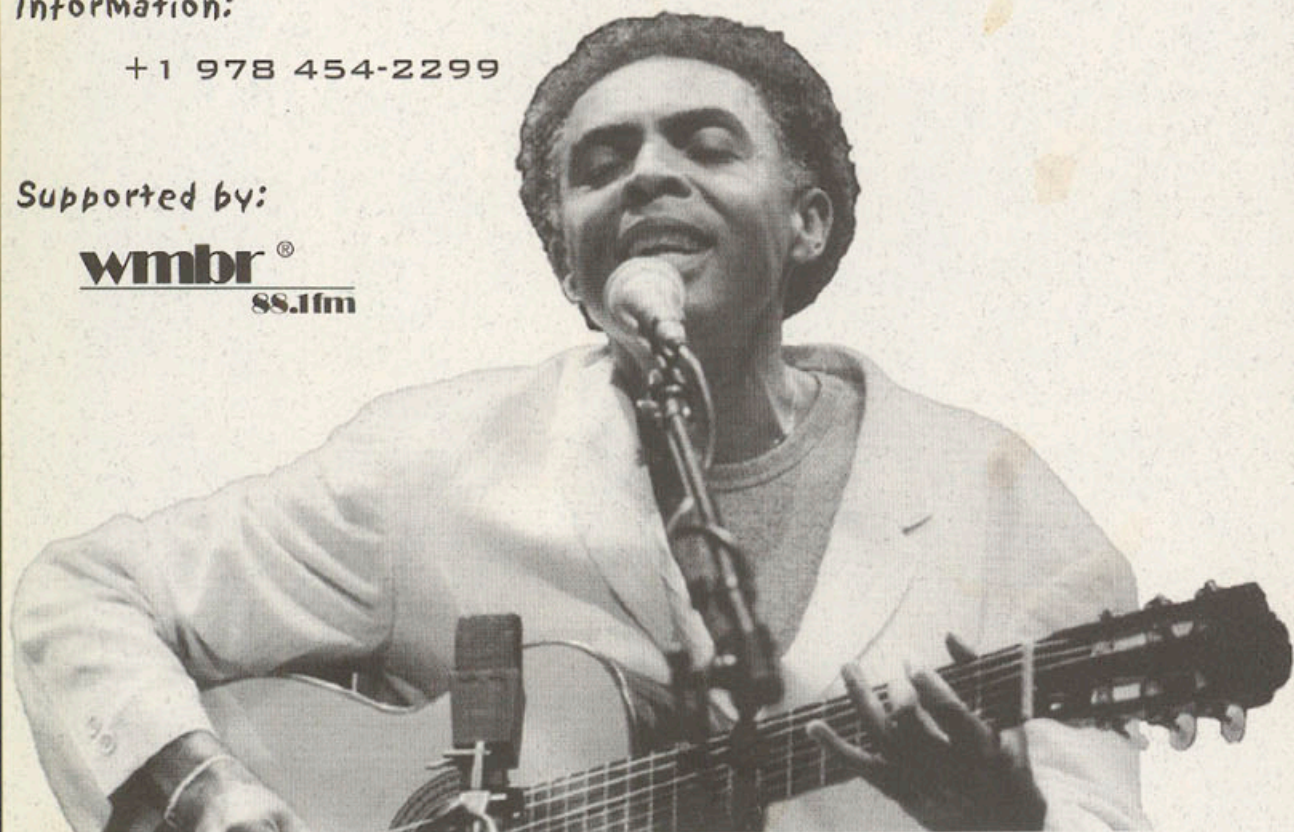
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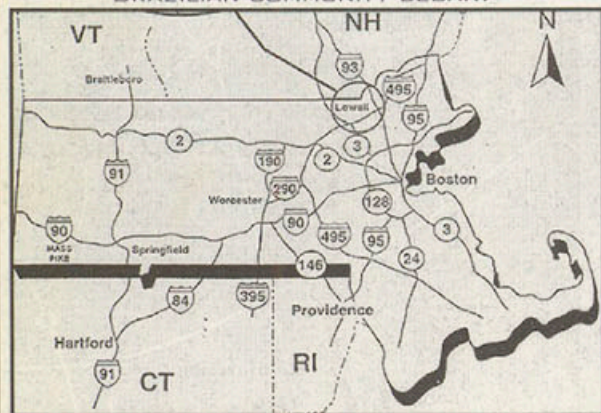
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## News & Views

- Gilberto Gil "Quanta Live" Tours the US .. 1  
Letters from Our Readers ..... 4  
Learning about Brazilian Music:  
Choro: The Tradition Lives On ..... 5  
Getting to Know Gilberto Gil ..... 10

## Reviews

- Brazil's Master Storyteller Reads from  
the Book on Concertizing:  
Caetano Veloso in Concert in  
Lowell, July 10, 1999 ..... 12

## Listings

- Brazilian Radio ..... 16  
Brazilian Concerts & Events ..... 17

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# LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Dear Bossa,

Last year I spent an evening at a nightclub high on a hill in the Santa Teresa section of Rio de Janeiro. One side of the club was completely open to the outside. The lights of Rio sparkled down below as the *chôro* band **Rabo de Lagartixa** created sparks of its own inside. It was not unlike being in the Berkeley hills overlooking San Francisco. The young, hip audience was much like the university crowd at a jazz concert in Berkeley. Listening to *chôro* music, it is difficult to understand why such lively, crackling, exuberant music should be named "crying." To paraphrase Tom Hanks, there's no crying in *chôro*. There's no crying in *chôro*!

Rabo is composed of a 7-string guitarist, a *cavaquinho* player, a bassist and a lovely female saxophonist. All players are virtuosos on their instruments. I was enchanted by their varied repertoire as well as the breathtaking locale. I am now pleased to find that Rabo has issued a CD of this music. There are many "*participações especiais*" including the famous **Elza Soares** who sings the **Baden-Powell/Vinicius de Moraes** hit, *Formosa*.

I am also pleased to find another wonderful *chôro* CD by a group by the name of **Trio Madeira Brasil**. This band has something in common with *Rabo de Lagartixa*: the marvelous 7-string guitar player **Marcello Gonçalves**. This album features incredible guitar and *bandolim* riffs,

breathtaking dynamics, dramatic tempo changes and no crying! There's no crying in *chôro*! They also have guest artists on the CD including **Zé Renato** who sings **Egberto Gismonti's** beautiful *Loro*.

I feel compelled to try to explain the art of *chôro* to the uninitiated. When I go to my neighborhood music store and I look in the Brazilian Music section, there are many, many recordings of *samba* music, but few, if any, *chôros*. I think the name has something to do with it. Would you expect to enjoy a form of music whose name translates in English to "crying?" Probably not. Now, imagine a **Scott Joplin** composition arranged for a string trio and you may start to get the flavor of the music. Indeed, *Trio Madeira Brasil* includes Joplin's *Easy Winners* on their CD. When Joplin's music was rediscovered twenty-five years ago, it presented a classification problem. Was this classical music or jazz? Jazz and classical radio stations both programmed this music. *Chôro* presents the same classification problem. It is both jazzy and classical sounding simultaneously. In addition to the Joplin piece *Madeira Brasil's* CD includes music by **Manuel de Falla**, **Chico Buarque** and **Pixinguinha**. This is truly a varied repertoire.

I highly recommend the music of *Trio Madeira Brasil* and *Rabo de Lagartixa*. You will probably not find them in your local warehouse. The bands' internet addresses are:

[rabodelagartixa@momentus.com.br](mailto:rabodelagartixa@momentus.com.br) or  
<http://www.momentus.com.br/users/rdl>.

Curt Huff, Las Vegas NV

## LEARNING ABOUT BRAZILIAN MUSIC

# CHORO: THE TRADITION LIVES ON

by Egídio Leitão, Austin, TX

The music of Brazil is as varied and vast as the country itself. Though world audiences are more familiar with *samba* and *bossa nova*, there is yet another very Brazilian type of music: *choro* [cry, weep]. It originated in the second half of the nineteenth century, around the 1870s, by the hand of the son of former slaves, **Joaquim Antônio da Silva Calado Júnior**. Calado Jr. is given credit to having created the first group of *choro* musicians, *Choro carioca*. That ensemble consisted of a flute (Calado Jr.), two acoustic guitars, and a *cavaquinho* [a small Brazilian guitar]. At times, some ensembles would add a clarinet, ophicleide or trombone, and some percussion.

*Choro* is "art music of Brazilian national character," as described by **David P. Appleby** in *The Music of Brazil* (U. Texas Press, 1989, p. 71). The term itself was coined based on the melancholy aspect of the music. The modulations and bass sounds from the acoustic guitars would give audiences the "impressions of melancholy," says **José Ramos Tinhorão** (*Pequena História da Música Popular*, Editora Vozes, 1974, p. 95). As misleading as the term *choro* might be for some people, the music itself is far from being sad. *Choro* is often characterized by improvisation, lively sounds, and a fast

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tempo.

Besides Calado Jr., Brazil had some other extraordinary *choro* performers and composers at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. In **Ary**

**Vasconcelos'** study of *choro* (*Carinhoso Etc.: História e Inventário do Choro*, Gráfica Editora do Livro, 1984), he divides *choro* history into six phases.

In the first phase, from 1870 to 1889, there are those composers who gave us the foundations of what *choro* is today. It is in that phase that we find, besides Calado Jr., **Francisca Hedwiges Gonzaga** (**Chiquinha Gonzaga**) and **Ernesto Nazareth**, two of Brazil's most well-known *choro* composers. Calado Jr. produced gems such as "Caiu! Não Disse?" "Macia," "Linguagem do Coração," and many others. Chiquinha Gonzaga, though not strictly a *choro* composer (she was the first *Carnaval* muse), wrote classics such as "Atraente," "Passos no Choro," and "Corta-Jaca." As for Ernesto Nazareth, the list of *choro*, *tangos*, waltzes, and *polkas* is impressive. Vasconcelos states that "if all *choro* compositions were lost, the genre would survive entirely on Nazareth's compositions," such as "Brejeiro," "Travesso," "Odeon," "Fon-Fon," "Apanhei-te, Cavaquinho," and over 200 others.

Included in the subsequent phases, there are **Anacleto de Medeiros**, **Cândido Pereira da Silva**, **Zequinha de Abreu** (with the world-famous "Tico-Tico no Fubá"), **Lourival Inácio de Carvalho** or **Louro** (with the unforgettable "Urubu Malandro"), and **Alfredo**

Continued on page 7





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da Rocha Viana Jr. or Pixinguinha, considered by many as the greatest name in *choro*.

To list all of *choro*'s exponents would be a tedious and incomplete task, as the genre keeps receiving new devotees and excellent performers. Vasconcelos's phases end in 1984, and since then, several names have established themselves as superb followers of this *choro* tradition.

Showing two different and strong trends of the same tradition, there are two performers—one a piano soloist, the other a *choro* group—who fit in this mostly Brazilian musical tradition. Luiz Simas' *New Chorinhos From Brazil* is more closely associated with Ernesto Nazareth's style, whereas *Água de Moringa's Saracoteando* fits Calado Jr.'s group formation.

• **Luiz Simas: New Chorinhos From Brazil** Lydjul Records LJ195 (1998) (<http://www.luizsimas.com>)

*Choro* is a music form that requires a lot of soul both for performing and composing it. What sets *New Chorinhos* apart from other *choro* releases is the fact the music is all original material by a new composer. In order to convey emotions hidden in the melody, the performer must put himself or herself in the mind of the composer. In *New Chorinhos*, Luiz Simas is totally at ease expressing sentiments through chord progressions and harmonies that suit the images the melody wants to communicate. One can think of *choro* as a cousin to the Portuguese *fado* in that it evokes feelings. Unlike *fado*, however, *choro* (or *chorinho* [little cry]) can be either a lively composition or an introspective, sad song.

Appropriately released on CD in the centennial year of Pixinguinha's birthday, *New Chorinhos From Brazil* is a priceless gift to Brazil's most notable *choro* composers. This is, by far, one of the best *choro* releases out of Brazil in recent

years. The musical scope in *New Chorinhos from Brazil* varies from the sublime to the playful. Clear influences from other *choro* composers, e.g., Ernesto Nazareth, can be subtly perceived in various numbers. There are also classical influences in some of the music, with **Chopin** and **Bach** being very prominent. These influences enhance the artistry of Simas' compositions as he superbly draws from *polkas* and *tangos*.

*Chorinho das Comadres* [Old Ladies' *Chorinho*] elicits the type of frolicsome activities so prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th century

gatherings in Rio de Janeiro's high society. *Chorinho com Bossa*

[*Chorinho* with Style], as the name itself implies, is a *bossa nova* influenced *chorinho*.

Simas uses chord structures and a

melody line that could easily be transposed to a balmy *bossa nova* tune.

*Saltitante* [Hoppy] is animated, whereas *Preguiçoso* [Lazy] is pensive. Feelings and states of mind permeate *New Chorinhos From Brazil*, and it is exactly in that masterful style that Luiz Simas chooses to express those emotions that he succeeds most notably. Whether with *Chorinho Bachiano* [*Choro* for J.S. Bach] or *A Ladeira do Sobe-e-Desce* [Up and Down the Road], you can easily capture the more classical subtleties in Simas new *chorinhos*. What Brazilian release would be complete without a song about the ocean? *Chorinho do Mar* [*Chorinho of the Sea*] fits the bill. Just like the soft wavy motions of tropical beaches, *Chorinho do Mar* brings a serene mood full of mysticism.



Continued on page 13

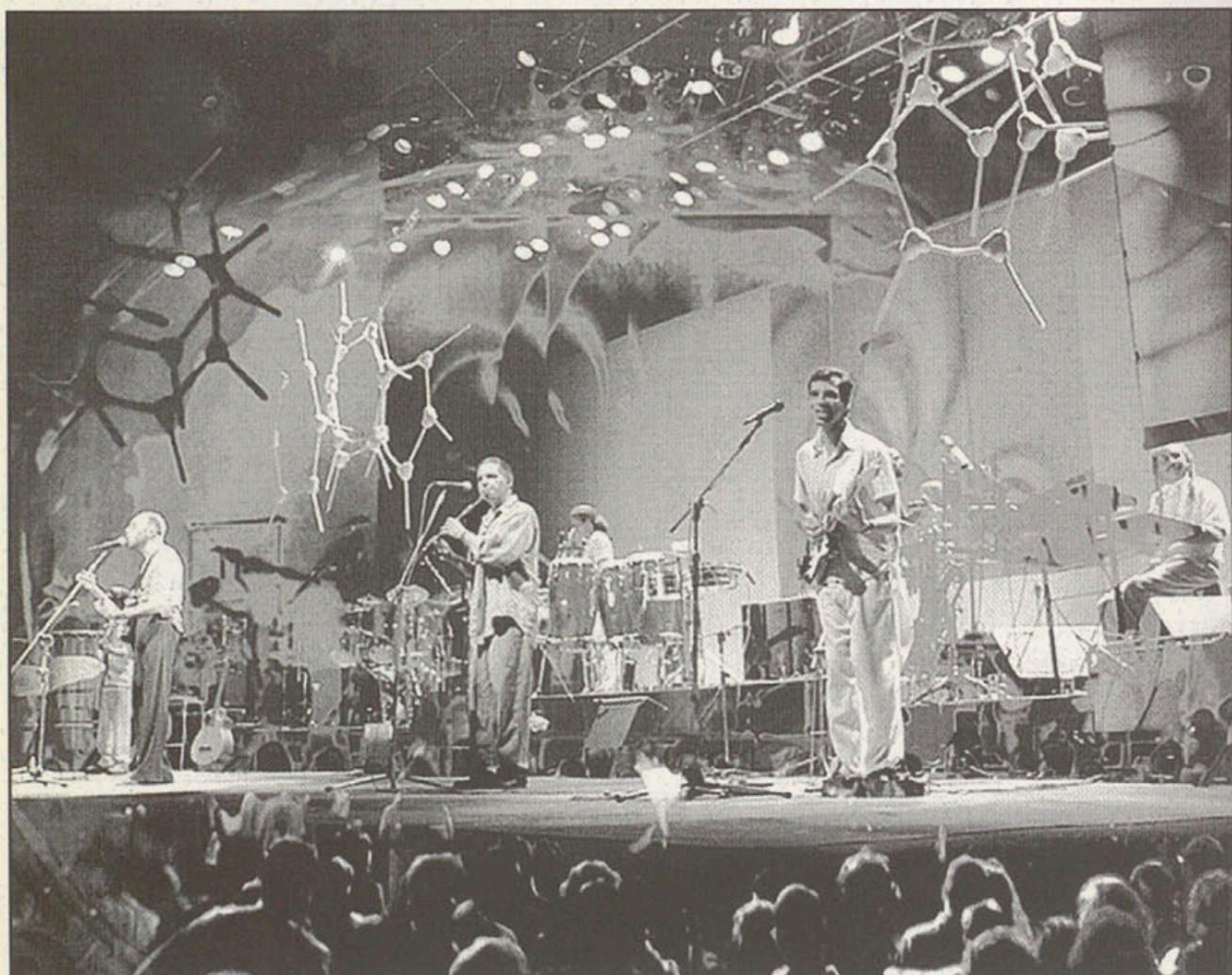
Gilberto Gil started looking at different horizons. He immediately felt in love with the voice and the guitar of **João Gilberto**, and the experience made him switch from the accordion to the guitar. He first joined a group called *Desafinados*. And the guitar is still Gil's instrument today.

Gil, a pioneer of the Tropicalism movement, is a cultural revolutionary. In the '60s, together with **Caetano Veloso**, **Tom Zé**, and others, he fought against the military regime with lyrics that were both socially conscious and provocative. The movement also broke traditions in Brazilian music introducing electric guitar into the acoustic Brazilian *bossa nova*. But, breaking barriers with his innovations didn't keep Gil away from

his origins of the beat of Bahia. Throughout his career, Gil brought with him the roots of his childhood: the *repente*, *baião*, and *forró*, as well as many others Brazilian rhythms he learned along the way, with *bossa nova* as a primary example.

After a career spanning 30 years and 33+ albums, Gilberto Gil proved that he is one of the most important messengers of Brazilian culture, a black messenger who elevated Afro-Brazilian music to the top levels of international music. Gil made all Brazilians proud when he won the highest award in international music, and sent a message to the world that Brazil has the richest music on the planet. With his latest album "Quanta Live," Gil won the Grammy as Best World Music Album of '98. So, to rein-

Gilberto Gil in concert with "Quanta Live"; photo: Gert Seewald



force his conquest, long-awaited Brazilian star Gilberto Gil will be touring 14 cities in the US this fall.

The "Quanta Live" tour starts on September 5 in Aspen, CO and ends on the 25 in Miami. Twenty days and 14 performances will unite a band formed by eight musicians including **Sérgio Chianazolli** on guitar, **Arthur Maia** on bass, **Claudio Andrade** on keyboards, **Marcelo Martins** on sax and flute, **Jorge Gomes** on drums, and the two percussionists **Leonardo Reis** and **Gustavo de Dalva**. For sure, the most Brazilian concert of the entire tour will be happening on September 18 in the Lowell Memorial Auditorium in Lowell, MA.

As can be expected of a Grammy winner, Gilberto Gil is coming with a very surprising and impressive production. As in Caetano Veloso's tour, Gilberto Gil will not have any floor monitors on stage. He is working with wireless in-ear monitors. The stage set up is unusual, with three levels. A highest level for percussion, shortest for drums and keyboards and the regular stage level is for the rest of the band. Another highlight is the lighting system with almost 200 lamps enriching the scenery that includes a 20-foot high panel, as well as sets representing molecules hanging around the lights. A phenomenal sound system with over 40 microphones is part of Gil's show. It promises to be a very cool tour.

As the name says "Quanta Live" is an album recorded live on August 13-14, 1997 at João Caetano's theater in Rio de Janeiro. In Brazil, the album was entitled "*Quanta gente veio ver*" [How Many People Came to See]. In the CD liner notes, they estimate that 235,000 people attended the show "Quanta Live" between the months of April and December of '97 during the tour in Brazil, Europe, and the US. In the US, Gilberto

Gil performed in 4 cities only: New York, Miami, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. But Gil is a great messenger, so he gains more followers. And this time, only in the US, Gil will performed for an estimated audience of 41,000 people during his 14 performances through out the country.

Gil will be performing old hits such as "*Palco* [Stage]," "*Cérebro eletrônico* [Electronic Brain]," "*Refavela*," his own, and "*A Novidade* [The News]" by Gil in partnership with **Herbert Vianna**, **Bi Ribeiro**, and **João Barone** all members of the band *Os Paralamas do Sucesso*.

Gil's repertoire includes two songs by **Bob Marley**: "Is This Love?" and "Stir It Up," besides the new hits such as "*Vendedor de caranguejo* [Crab Vendor]," "*Estrela* [Star]," "*Pela Internet* [Through the Internet]" and much more. Check out Bossa's Concerts & Events, and don't miss the chance to experience this living legend and his incredible Brazilian music, Gilberto Gil. 🎵

**CORRECTION FROM  
THE CD REVIEW  
CAETANO VELOSO'S  
PRENDA MINHA BY  
DENNIS MILLER  
(BOSSA JULY/AUG.  
1999 V.5 6 P. 16)**

Correction in the first paragraph—the highlighted part was missing from the original article:

"Number 1: I don't usually go for **live albums very much. Oh, they're fine for jazz or classical music,** music that was meant to be performed live and sounds best in the acoustic expanse of a concert hall or rowdy ambiance of a nightclub."

*Bossa* regrets the error. 🎵