

Gilberto Gil - Fe na Festa - (2010)

Written by bluelover

Tuesday, 15 June 2010 16:24 - Last Updated Friday, 25 September 2015 12:59

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- 01 - Fé na festa
- 02 - O livre-atirador e a pegadora
- 03 - Assim, sim
- 04 - Estrela azul do céu
- 05 - Marmundo
- 06 - Vinte e seis
- 07 - Não tenho medo da vida
- 08 - Norte da saudade
- 09 - Maria minha
- 10 - Aprendi com o rei
- 11 - Dança da moda
- 12 - São João carioca
- 13 - Lá vem Ela

In his latest work *Fé na Festa*, Brazil's former Minister of Culture Gilberto Gil returns to his roots to celebrate the São João festival, a celebration, which fills northeastern calendars with a week of wall to wall forró in the month of June (more on forró music can be found [here](#)). In Brazil this is the end of the rainy season, as well as the corn harvest; the perfect time to celebrate.

The title track instantly grabs you with its racy guitars, violins and steady percussion. The easy to follow chorus invites group participation in the best traditions of a Brazilian lual and warms up the uninitiated for the forró that is to follow.

Gilberto slows the beat down to a more traditional pé-da-serra pace for the next couple of

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tracks, with that most quintessential aspects of São João (and carnival for that matter): the amorous advance. “O Livre-Atirador e a Pegadora” tells of the innocence of the stolen kisses of youth (a youthfulness that can last well into your 30s in Brazil) whilst “Assim, Sim” gives instructions to a young lad on how to get that far. All the while the ubiquitous sound of the familiar triangle is enough to get you dancing side to side.

Unfortunately, towards the middle of the album the quality falls away. “Estrela Azul do Céu” moves away from the strictly northeastern to something more soulful, but the ra-ta-tat rhythm of Gilberto’s voice drives it on. The middle section of the album meanders a bit, but there is a stand-out track here; “Vinte e Seis”. The straightforward yet beautiful guitar syncs fantastically well with the uplifting accordion and violin to broadcast a simple pleasure found in Gilberto’s lyrics: the luck of having a birthday during the festive season of São João.

Towards the end of the album Gilberto returns to our forró education. “Aprendi com o Rei” brings back a more danceable forró beat and provides a useful intro to the musical form (if you can keep up whilst dancing). “Dança da Moda”, a cover of forró legend Luiz Gonzaga, is a true return to form. The rapid beat encourages more daring twists and turns and it is easy to see how even Rio de Janeiro can get caught up with this during São João, a point that the next track “São João Carioca” further hammers home.

Final track “Lá Vem Ela” brings us home in style, with the simple percussion some of the best you’ll hear on the album and the triangle a perfect accompaniment. Gilberto is playing games with words here, teasing the words out to build a greater meaning. The track is a perfect example of how Brazilian Portuguese can paint a beautiful scene in its seeming simplicity. We are tempted into the story of a beautiful girl whose grace enchants all those around her. The slower pace of Gilberto’s lyrics tell of a girl who can make time seemingly stand still. But just as São João brought her along, so it can take her away again as the week of festivities come to an end. ---Sam Katterfield, soundsandcolours.com

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