

caetano veloso

“...always dressing his ideas with instrumental touches that are engaging and as imaginative as his exquisite vocals.”

LOS ANGELES TIMES

“One of music’s true individualists: a singer whose radiant voice always sounds unassumingly sincere, a composer whose supple melodies solve intricate harmonic puzzles, a lyricist who trusts listeners to follow complex ideas as well as intimate confessions.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES



CAETANO VELOSO, dubbed “one of the greatest songwriters of the century” (The New York Times), is among the most influential and beloved artists to emerge from Brazil. Known there since the 1960’s, Veloso has made more than thirty recordings to date and has developed a strong international following.

Born in Santo Amaro, Bahia, in 1942, Caetano Veloso began his professional musical career in 1965 in Sao Paulo. In his first compositions he drew on the bossa novas of Joao Gilberto, but rapidly began to develop his own distinctive style. Absorbing musical and aesthetic ideas from sources as diverse as The Beatles, concrete poetry, the French Dadaists and the Brazilian modernist poets of the 1920s, Caetano, together with Gilberto Gil, Gal Costa, his sister Maria Bethania, and a number of other poets and intellectuals, founded a movement called Tropicalismo. By experimenting with new sounds and words, adding electric guitars to their bands and utilizing the imagery of modern poetry, Caetano became a musical revolutionary.

This short-lived movement, founded in 1968, ended abruptly when Caetano and Gil were sent into exile and lived in London. Now universally credited with redefining what is known as Brazilian music, it laid the groundwork for a renaissance of Brazilian popular music both at home and abroad. Caetano and Gil returned to Brazil in 1972 and found that Tropicalismo had remained intact and their audience had continued to grow.

Although Tropicalismo set the tone for Caetano’s career, his music has evolved greatly over the years. Incorporating elements of rock, reggae, fado, tango, samba canao, baião and rap-- with lyrics containing some of the best poetry in a musical tradition rich in verse-- Caetano’s music is sometimes traditional, sometimes contemporary, often hybrid. At once an astute social commentator and balladeer of highly emotive love songs, Caetano is one of the most respected poets in the Portuguese language. Indeed he is one of only a handful of artists who has resolved how to be musically modern and still undeniably Brazilian.

Veloso followed his 1999 Grammy Award-Winning Nonesuch release *Livro*, an album which garnered widespread critical acclaim in the US and brought with it his first-ever US tour, followed by a soundtrack for the Carlos Diegues film *Orfeu*. He has since released four recordings on Nonesuch including *Noites de Norte* (2001), *Live in Bahia* (2002), *A Foreign Sound* (2004) and *Cê* (2007).

Veloso’s 41st album, *zii e zie*, released last year in South America and Europe, has already earned him a Latin Grammy for 2009 Best Singer-Songwriter album; Nonesuch released the record in the United States in 2010. The samba-inspired album’s title is an Italian phrase for “uncles and aunts” that the singer/songwriter liked for the way it looks and sounds, and selected “because of the freedom of the mysterious choice.”

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