

Brazilian Sound: You Play What?

Contributed by Daniella Thompson
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José Eduardo Gramani (1944–1998) was a violinist, fiddler, composer, conductor, musical scholar, and professor at the Universidade de Campinas (Unicamp). He was one of the foremost authorities on the Brazilian fiddle (rabeca) in its multitudinous forms.

Gramani founded various musical ensembles that survive him, performing disparate styles of music. One of these is the vocal-instrumental group *Ânima*, which specializes in early music.

Another is the trio *Carcoarco*, whose music is produced via a mind-boggling array of violins, rabecas, and percussion instruments.

The trio, two of whose members are graduates of Unicamp, has been active since 1999 and performed with the likes of Dori Caymmi, Paulo Moura, Guinga, and Sebastião Tapajós, as well as in various festivals. Last fall they gave a performance and a workshop at Harvard University.

Carcoarco trio

The name *Carcoarco*, tells us Luiz Fiaminghi, is an invention of Gramani's. *Calcar o arco* means to play the violin with fervor. Gramani grew up in Itapira, São Paulo, where the local dialect turns *calcar* into *carca*. You get the idea.

Fervor (i.e., warmth and intensity) is dished out in spades in the trio's album *Tu Toca o Que?*, a meeting point for choro, samba, forró, maracatu, xote, marcha, frevo, and baião, all rendered with a sophisticated, erudite touch. Half the disc is given over to Gramani's compositions, the other to classics of the choro repertoire.

In the trio's deft hands, the standards are transported to a realm far beyond their traditional confines. Listen to the highly original transformation undergone by that old warhorse "Apanhei-te, Cavaquinho."

Tu Toca o Que? is a series of rich variations subtly wrought with a deliberately restricted palette, a chamber music of refined popular idioms. Its allures are inexhaustible.

To obtain the disc, contact *Carcoarco*.

Carcoarco: Tu Toca o Que?
(Independent MCD 125; 2002) 41:19 min.

01. Choro de 78 (Zé Gramani)
02. Forró de Ferdinanda (Zé Gramani)
03. Friozinho da Manhã (Zé Gramani)
04. Apanhei-te, Cavaquinho (Ernesto Nazareth)
05. Viva Raimundo (Zé Gramani)
06. Segura Ele (Pixinguinha)
07. Naquele Tempo (Pixinguinha)
08. 1 x 0 (Pixinguinha)
09. Juba (Zé Gramani)
10. Madrugada (Zé Gramani)
11. Não Me Toques (Zequinha de Abreu)
12. Bandolim Abandonado (Zé Gramani)
13. Delicado (Waldir Azevedo)

Carcoarco

Esdras Rodrigues: rabeca & violin

Luiz Fiaminghi: rabeca & violin

Roberto Peres "Magrão": ceramic pots, pandeiro, zabumba, berimbau & marimba

You can read more about Brazilian music and culture at Daniella Thompson on Brazil here: <http://daniv.blogspot.com/>