
Gilberto Gil Among Brazilians at Lebanon's International Music Festival

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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Brazilian artists are among the highlights of the international music festivals to take place this month and August, in Lebanon. July 19, singer and composer Gilberto Gil, who is also the minister of Culture of Brazil, was a guest at Beiteddine Palace, some 50 kilometers away from Beirut, the country capital.

The show is part of Beiteddine Festival, which began on the July 12 and should continue with nine other presentations up to August 12.

Gilberto Gil and his band Banda Larga played at Beiteddine Palace, the ancient home of the rulers of Lebanon in the 18th century, and now one of the main tourist points in the country. The Brazilian musician has over 50 albums recorded, has won 12 gold records, five platinum records and seven Grammys. Gil has over five million records sold.

Still this month, Brazilian body percussion group Barbatuques is going to play on the 25th and 26th. The shows are part of Byblos Festival, in one of the most ancient cities in the world. Byblos is one of the richest archaeological sites in the Middle East, full of temples destroyed by the Crusaders.

Barbatuques group is formed of 14 artists who developed a group based on exploration of several sounds that may be produced by the human body. Clapping, clicking, chest slapping, tap dancing, mouth vacuum, vocal effects and other kinds of body sounds are transformed into rhythm and melodies.

In August it is the turn of Brazilian pianist Tania Maria, who will play in Baalbeck Festival on the 16th. The location is another Lebanese archaeological site that houses six of the 44 columns of the largest religious building of the Roman empire.

Born in São Luis, in the state of Maranhão, Tania Maria started studying piano at the age of seven and at 13 she won a regional competition with a music group started by her father.

With 25 records, the artist is one of the great talents of Brazilian jazz, and she uses Samba and Choro in her music. In Baalbeck, Tania Maria is going to play accompanied by percussionist Mestre Carneiro, bass player Marc Bertaux and drummer Caio Mamberti.

These festivals are being reopened this year after two years on hold due to the conflicts in the country. Baalbeck Festival, which begins on the 27th, ends on the 23rd of August and includes musicians from Argentina, Mexico, the United States, Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East. Among the artists are Patti Smith, Branford Marsalis and

Mika.

Anba