

Cyro Baptista's Banquet of the Spirits

Program Note:

"In the early days of the Portuguese conquest of the land that would one day be Brazil, a Catholic bishop named Sardinha won a place in the nation's history simply by being the guest of honor at an unusual dinner. In fact, he was the dinner—for a tribe of cannibals.

It was a menu that has resonated throughout 20th-century Brazilian culture. In 1928, Brazilian writer Oswald de Andrade extrapolated the concept of "antropophagism," or cultural cannibalism—taking the offerings of Europe, consuming them, assimilating them, and using them for Brazilian ends.

Sometimes the process has been undeclared and subtle, as with the bossa nova hipsters' merging of samba and American cool jazz. Sometimes it has been explicit: The Tropicalistas of the late 1960s cited de Andrade's concept as a direct inspiration when they took the music of the Beatles, Bob Dylan, and European avant-garde composers and pulped it with Brazilian musical forms and their own rebellious energy, creating a wholly unique culture explosion."

— Lee Gardner

Banquet of the Spirits embodies the Brazilian philosophy of *anthropofagia*—cultural cannibalism. The band is a musical manifestation of the process of eating, swallowing, and digesting all the tendencies that are part of the sonic landscape. The music is a product of the sounds these players have collectively consumed over the years; some of them they have digested and others they have rejected. Through this process it has been difficult to identify what belongs to what country, culture, or religion.

We all have the anthropofagic nature within us
We devour each other seeking transformation
The mouth is sacred because of all the things that come in and go out
We eat, we speak, we kiss, we smile and sing
The mouth is the portal to our brain, stomach and heart
The mouth is the system connecting our intellect, emotion and spirit
And it digests everybody and everything in its path
All is gloriously regurgitated
We choose the essentials
And eat again
And again
And again

— Cyro Baptista