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## Cyro Baptista

### Percussionist/Composer

### Biography

"...The man the stars call when they want that otherworldly flavor in the mix..." - Time Out New York

Since arriving in the United States in 1980 from his native country Brazil, Cyro Baptista has emerged as one of the premiere percussionists in the country. Coinciding with the rise in the public's interest of world music, Cyro has managed to record and tour with some of music's most popular names. His mastery of Brazilian percussion and the many instruments he creates himself, have catapulted him to world renown.

With his own project, the percussion and dance ensemble known as "Beat The Donkey" Cyro gives free reign to his imagination, mixing his tremendous musical skills, his natural humor and theatrical ways with instruments from Brazil, the Middle East, Indonesia, Africa and the U.S.

Cyro's credits read like a "Who's Who" of modern music. He has toured extensively with Yo-Yo Ma's Brazil Project, Trey Anastasio's Band (of Phish), John Zorn's Electric Masada, Herbie Hancock's Grammy award-winning "Gershwin's World", Sting and Paul Simon's "Rhythm of the Saints".

Other artists Cyro Baptista has performed and recorded with include David Byrne, Kathleen Battle, Gato Barbieri, Dr. John, Brian Eno, Robert Palmer, Melissa Etheridge, Laurie Anderson, John Zorn, James Taylor, Carly Simon, Michael Tilson Thomas, Daniel Barenboim, Bobby McFerrin, Wynton Marsalis, Medeski Martin & Wood, Spyro Gyra, Jay-Z, Snoop Dogg, and Santana. He has also played with many respected Brazilian artists such as Milton Nascimento, Caetano Veloso, Ivan Lins, Marisa Monte, and Nana Vasconcelos.

Cyro has performed on five Grammy award -winning albums: Yo-Yo-Ma's "Obrigado Brasil", Cassandra Wilson's "Blue Light 'Til Dawn", The Chieftains' "Santiago", Ivan Lins' "A Love Affair", and Herbie Hancock's highly-acclaimed "Gershwin's World". A documentary on Cyro's main project, "Beat the Donkey", was recorded for the WGBH-TV Boston program 'La Plaza' and continues to air on PBS stations nationwide. Cyro collaborated with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra for a Brazilian Carnival modern jazz concert.

The first Beat the Donkey recording (Tzadik) was picked by *The New York Times* as one of the ten best alternative albums of 2002. Readers of JAZZIZ and DRUM magazine voted it "Best Brazilian CD of the Year" and named Cyro "Best Percussionist of 2002."

Cyro's first solo recording, Villa Lobos/Vira Loucos, a heady mix of his own compositions with the work of the brilliant Brazilian composer Heitor Villa Lobos, has been acclaimed as "the most courageous, bright, funny, dramatic, and imaginative work in recent memory."

Blue Note Records released "Supergenerous", a duo CD recorded with guitarist Kevin Breit (KD Lang, Cassandra Wilson). *Billboard* called "Supergenerous" "pure aural pleasure" and the *Washington Post* called it "a marvelous debut that manages to feel outside and intimate at the same time."

Cyro has also been composing music for the children's television Nickelodeon.