



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK ARTS & HERITAGE PROGRAM

FIELDNOTES

Fieldworker(s) [(Initials) Name]: (MH) Maggie Holtzberg, (BL) Bronwyn Low

Accession Numbers:

MH-07-28-FN

Fieldnotes

- - -C

Audio recordings

MH-07-28-D

Photographic documentation

MH-07-28-M

Additional materials

Initial Contact: _____ Contact Date: 9/9/2007

Related Accession Numbers: - - - - -

Individual/Group/Event: 12th Brazilian Independence Day Festival and Bumba-meu-boi performance

Address: Aresani Park

City: Brighton/Allston Zip: _____ County: Suffolk

Phone: Daytime: _____ Evening: _____

E-mail: _____ Website: _____

Contact person: Festival organized primarily by the Brazilian Women's Group

Title: _____

Location of Interview: Artesani Park along the Charles River

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

Special Needs (including translation): _____

Traditions documented on visit (traditional art/skills, occupational experience, ethnic or religious community): Outdoor festival with booths for communtiy organizations, vendors, food, and performances including Bumba-meu-boi, capoeiristas and a "recita de Samba"

Traditions noted for follow-up: Marcus Santos and Batuk Axe, part of the local community organization AfroBrazil

Other Possible Contacts: see attached for summary description

Brazilian Independence Day Festival

Bumba-meu-boi performance

Artesani Park, Brighton/Allston

September 9, 2007

History

Maggie Holtzberg noticed a Brazilian street parade performance during Lowell Festival 2007. Program notes and press releases indicated the performance was called "Boi Bumba," a Brazilian ox dance, and that it was led/accompanied by Marcus Santos and BatukAxé, part of the local community organization AfroBrazil. AfroBrazil's website (<http://www.afrobrazil.org>) indicated "Boi Bumba" would be performed again at the Brazilian Independence Day Festival in Brighton/Allston on September 9, 2007. Maggie and Bronwyn Low attended the event and took photographs, in part to determine whether the performance would be appropriate as part of the public programs accompanying the Keepers of Tradition exhibiton, and in part to try to document any Brazilian folk traditions carried on in Massachusetts.

Event Context

The festival is organized primarily by the Brazilian Women's Group.

Actual Brazilian Independence Day is September 7, 2007.

Festival description: Outdoor festival with booths for community organizations, health care, Museum of Science and Museum of Fine Arts, sponsors, church groups, activities for children, vendors selling Brazilian commercial items (flags, soccer jerseys) and other commercial items (lingerie, jewlrey), vendors selling Brazilian food, and performances including Bumba-meu-boi, capoeiristas, and a "Recita de Samba" [Festival program is on file].

Festival program & Bumba-meu-boi

Formal festival program began with Brazilian national anthem, introductions of organizers and other special guests and student awards, all in Portuguese, with much of it translated into English.

As musical group prepared to take over, DJ played dance music [photograph of couple dancing, forro?]. Then musical group took over (Batuk'Axé according to program, led by Marcus Santos, directed by Robson Lemos according to AfroBrazil website and information from Lowell Festival 2007). Costumed characters and percussion ensemble led a parade of festival goers, constantly encouraging the general population to join in, that wound its way through the festival grounds as a celebration of Brazilian culture, art, and music [multiple photographs].

Then "Bumba-meu-boi" performance started back at the bandstand.

Performance Summary

Characters sing, act/pantomime, dance, and narrate during the performance, accompanied by musicians - musical instruments included flute-like instruments and drums/percussions. Core story involves the life, death, and resurrection of an ox. Set of 4-

6 main players in costumes with various props. Men's costumes include big straw hats with ribbons and flowers, costumes are a mix of bright colors and white and black – costumes and props are very rustic, not polished. Crowd of festival goers (families, adult groups, etc.) surround performers in a semi-circle. Players involve crowd in clapping and other interactions. All music/words in Portuguese. Performance lasts about half an hour.

Performance Details

Players included: man in polk dots who seemed to be primary narrator; woman in black who mostly narrated, but played other roles; woman in white, who played multiple roles; man in horse or burro costume who primarily looked on/played instruments?; and a few miscellaneous players who played the ox, the other horse, etc.

Characters included: narrators, an ox at center of the story, goddess/spirit who kills ox, a horse or burro who didn't take part too much, another horse, another goddess ...

[According to AfroBrazil website, they include Boi, Burrinha, Cavalo Marinho, Indio, Yansan, Capoeiristas]

- 1 – 4 characters dancing and singing “eu canta” – man in red shirt, man in polk dot, woman in black skirt, woman in white skirt
- 2 – characters whisper together, “o de casa”, polka dot man puts a picture of a house on a simple screen, more dancing involving umbrellas (red one symbolizing the sun?), involve crowd in clapping, capoeirista joins briefly
- 3 – “neute” – woman dancing with black umbrella (night sky)
- 4 - drum and tambourine join flutes, “la be a lua”, woman in white comes on with mask, and bride-like dress
- 5 – polka dot man with feather headress singing a capella, then others join
- 6 – ox costume brought out in pieces, everyone singing, then put the costume together on the ground covering someone (man with red shirt), “allegri”, music gets faster
- 7 – Ox rises, parades around with polk dot man who is holding a suitcase
- 8 – characters talk and set something up? “que bracos ele tem”, woman in white skirt comes out in new costume – crazy hair, short skirt “cuidados”, she fights with ox and kills him
- 9 – characters cover ox with blue cloth and woman in black skirt gets in a hole in the center and sings (so blue cloth looks like big rippling skirt)
- 10 – another horse comes out – yellow and blue, “marie-ou”, tries to bring ox to life? Pokes it, (polka dot man?) asks crowd to blow
- 11 – woman in white comes out with sword and red skirt (no flutes at this point, only drums) and dances and ox starts to move
- 12 – ox gets up and they get some people from crowd to join in the dance “boi bumba”, with drums and flutes
- 13 - end with “viva cultural brasileira” and introduction of cast and musicians. Then drummers start and lead crowd in some call and response ...