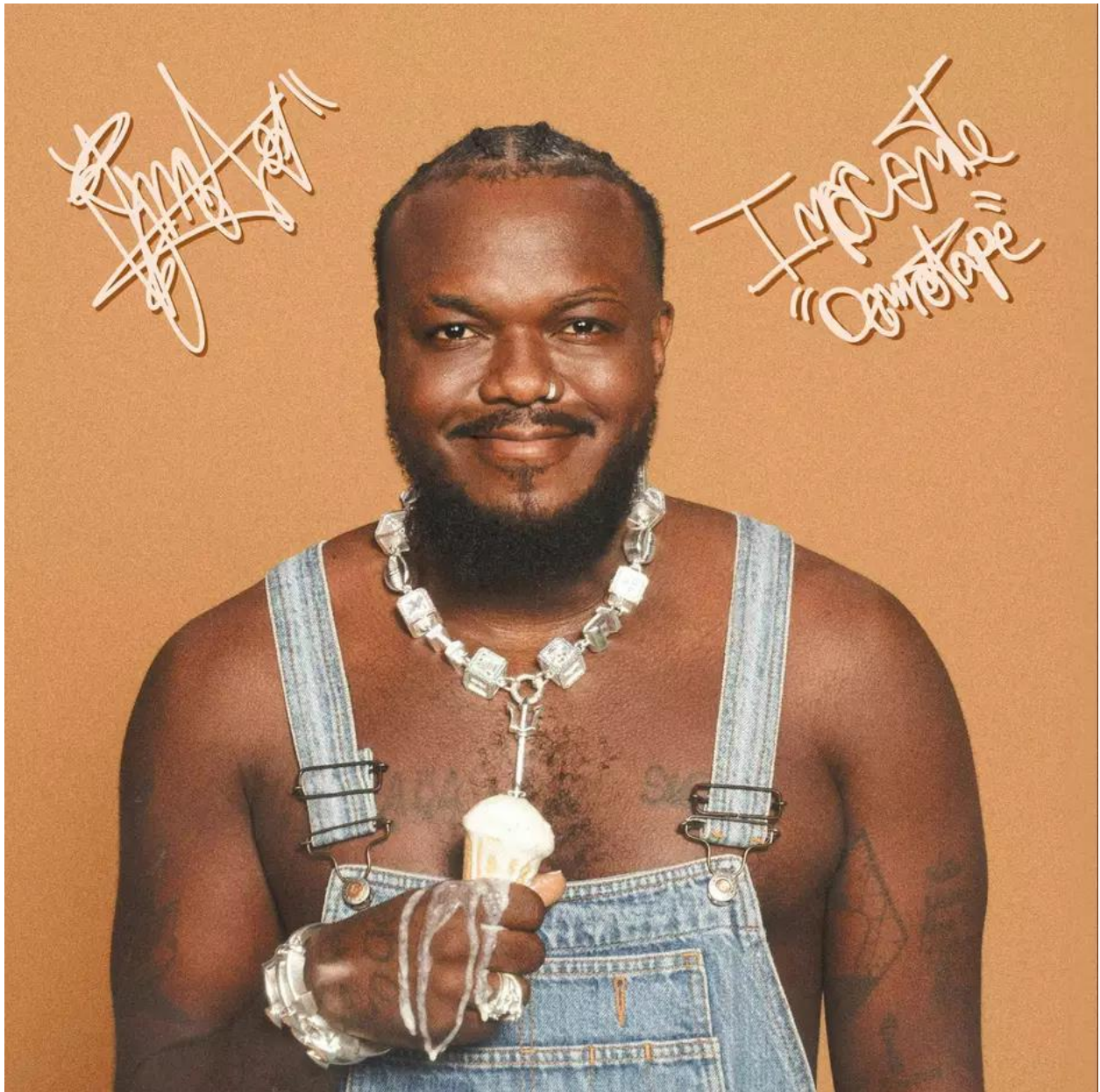


Emanuelle Lund

Inocente "demotape" (2023), Djonga Album review



Djonga

Gustavo Pereira Marques was born in Favela do Índio, Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

With great influence from his family, Djonga took a liking to music from an early age, having grown up listening to different musical styles and artists , for example Milton Nascimento, Racionais MCs, Cartola, Mariah Carey.



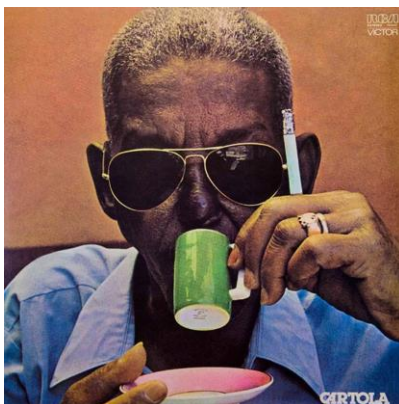
Favela do Índio, Belo horizonte, Brazil.



Milton Nascimento



Racionais Mcs



Cartola



Mariah Carey

Over time, he took his musical predilections, mainly funk and rap, and was also inspired by the work of Cazusa, Janis Joplin, Elis Regina, Elza Soares, Jimi Hendrix, MC Smith and, above all, Mano Brown.



Cazusa



Janis Joplin

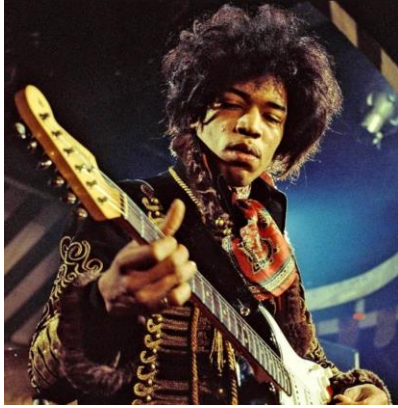


Elis Regina



Elza

Soares



Jimi Hendrix



MC Smith



Mano Brown

He studied history at the Federal University of Ouro Preto until the seventh period, getting close to graduating. However, he began to be successful as a rapper and decided to pursue his career, dropping out of the university.

The musical styles that the artist works most with are funk, samba, rap and trap. As Djonga himself said "Black culture is strong in my family, so samba was always present at parties"(...) "When I became more aware of what I really liked in relation to music, the one I identified with the most because of my generation was Brazilian funk. Funk has always spoken to me about my experience".



The artist draws attention because the lyrics of most of his songs are aggressive and with strong social criticism, however in this album he decides to change a little and do something innovative in his career by releasing an album that deals with themes such as love, romance, heartbreak and betrayal . Even though the main themes of the album are themes that the artist had never dealt with before in his career, he still maintains the essence for which he is known in some of his songs.



On the album Inocente “Demotape” the racial discussions and heavy topics he has dealt with since Heresia (2017), his first release, gave way to the sensitivity of someone who says he falls in love easily. “Talking to people on the street, I felt this demand to talk about love much more than to talk about racism and suffering. Those who like to talk about this issue all the time are the white university students on the left side of Brazilian politics,” he said in an interview with GQ Brasil.

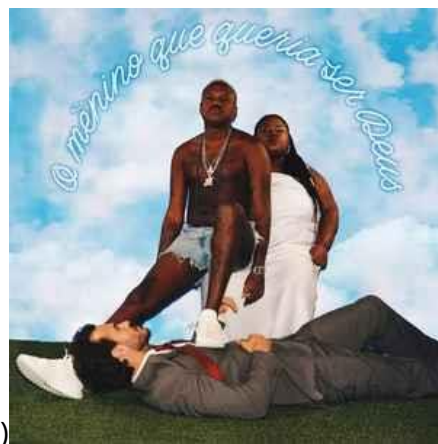


Previous albums covers compared with Inocente "Demotape" cover

In my opinion, the difference in themes and focuses of Inocente "demotape" compared to Djonga's other albums already begins on the covers, as it is a cover with happier colors, with himself smiling (something that didn't happen on any of the previous albums covers)



Heresia (2017)



O menino

que queria ser deus (2018)



Ladrão (2019)



Historias da

minha área (2020)

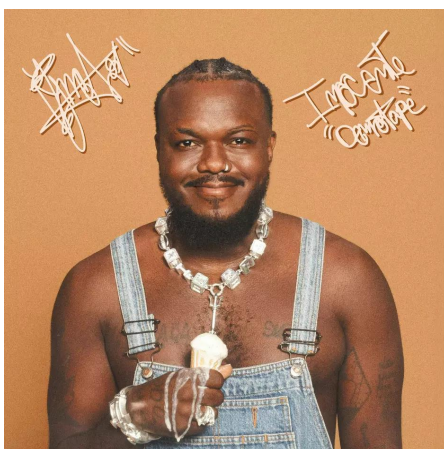


NU (2021)



O dono do lugar

(2022)



Inocente "Demotape" (2023)

Info of the album

“Making this record isn't about the music. It has to do, first and foremost, with an extremely personal life process. A search for the art I want to consume. It is above all a challenge for myself. It's about whether I can do it. About creating something that serves the party and that serves for moments of reflection.”-Djonga

“I need to show another side of myself. More silly, futile, with all these things that are also part of us”, says Djonga.

“For those looking to see what's good, welcome. For anyone who will accuse me of anything, I swear that I am: Innocent”. Thus, Djonga started promoting his seventh album on Instagram. Also, he anticipated the softer stance after years of artistic journey.

The rapper presents two versions of himself: the smiling one, who melts, and the libertine, with a heart of ice. The duality is manifested in the lyrics and the cover, which will be explained later.

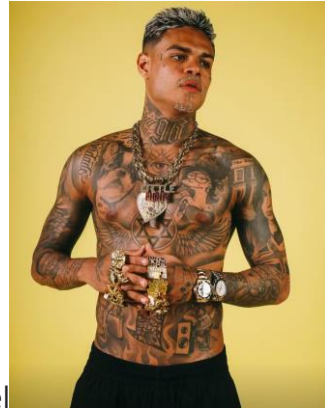
With eight songs, the album is produced by the producer “A Quadrilha” (created by the Djonga himself) and tells reflections on everyday problems.

The project has some songs with collaborations with other artists, such as Tz da coronel for “coração gelado”, MC cabelinho in “depois da meia noite”, Iza Sabino and Laura Sette in “fumaça”, Veigh and Thiago Lisboa, for the track “da lua”.

Lisboa highlighted the opportunity to sing with Djonga: “For me it is an incredible experience to sail through other seas, to have other versions of myself and to be able to contribute in some way to this incredible work. It's different from anything I've ever done and I'm sure this is just the beginning of a giant partnership between us.”



Tz da coronel



MC cabelinho



Iza Sabino



Laura Sette



Veigh

Cover

On the cover, Djonga does a version of the cover of the album 'Perfect Angel', by singer Minnie Riperton released in 1974. She was an American singer who sang in soul, R&B and rock styles, and became known for the song Lovin' You.

Djonga uses this inspiration to convey a message in the aesthetic composition. The idea of the title "Inocente" (in english: Innocent) lives up to the title of the album 'Perfect Angel', as the two names that represent innocence, in addition the elements on the cover convey the

idea of naivety and something harmless, such as the smile and the ice cream that melts in the hand, leading the viewer to a childish scene.



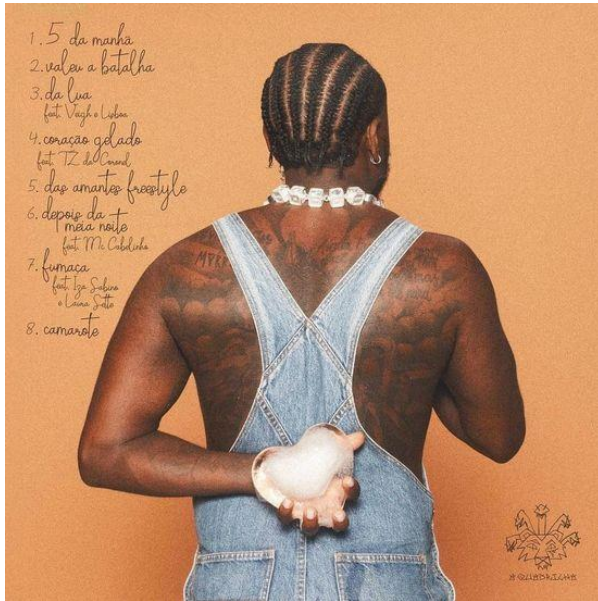
Perfect Angel (1974), Minnie Riperton



Innocent "Demotape" (2023), Djonga

Back cover

The back cover breaks the expectation of innocence that was given in the cover. Djonga appears in the same pose with one hand behind him holding an ice heart. It illustrates that Djonga is not so 'Innocent', that like everyone else, he has dualities, contradictions, different versions, a front and a back cover.



Info of the songs

5 da manhã

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRop6pb8MN8>

It's the opening track of the album and in my opinion the best choice for it because this song narrates an entire day, 24 hours, like a narration of what his or a eulyric's routine is like. And for me this demonstrates the opening of a cycle, which in this case would be the album and its other songs.

The song's lyrics detail the day's activities, from caring for children to leisure time and social gatherings. It does this with a chronological progression as in the parts:

- "yesterday I got up at 6 am gave the cubs a kiss and made coffee" (cubs in Portuguese would be "crias" which in this context is a slang term to refer to children, their children in this case)

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- "At seven I accelerated the skinny. To become fat with a bag, have the gold ropes and ditch the yellow ones" Translated into English, the slang in this lyric doesn't make much sense, but in Portuguese the interpretation of this slang would be something like driving to work to have better living conditions, making reference to a simply yellow chain and another gold chain, basically a reference to working to get out of the yellow chain (bad conditions) and be able to reach the golden chain (good conditions).
 - "At eight, the first fuss, nine, I was already pissed" The first fuss would be slang for the first problem at work
 - "Ten hours, I only think about crime" shows how difficult the routine is to the point where it crosses your mind that perhaps crime pays more than being an honest citizen
 - "Midday, I'm grateful for the food, I pray for myself and for my favela" This part would be lunch time in this person's routine, a moment where they are grateful for having food in such an unequal country, and pray that the people who don't have many conditions (like himself) can have food every day and get ahead in life.
 - "Eighteen, I observe the city, the traffic, the lights, life is so beautiful" This is an allusion to how his night life is 'better' than his day life, as that is when he goes out with the woman referred to in the chorus.
 - "One, let's launch the little step. Glass always full, smile on your face. Two, the two of us close together'. My hand on your ass and kiss on your neck. At three, we get stuck in the alley, if it's to be yours, tell me, I'm willing, At four, between four walls', he left it at ease" This excerpt takes place in the early hours of 1am-4am, building the story for the chorus that is at 5am
 - Chorus: "Five in the morning, and I'm thinking about that kiss of yours. Five in the morning, I saw that your smell is on my clothes. Five in the morning, my bed only has a pillow. Five in the morning, it's already five in the morning"
 - "And today I woke up at six" ends with this sentence due to the fact that this routine will be repeated for another day

After analyzing some of the schedules mentioned in the song, I come to the conclusion that the song addresses the duality between the responsibilities of everyday life and the

pleasures of the night, as if the artist were divided between two worlds: obligations and the search for personal satisfaction.

valeu a batalha

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7qT_LPsPCo

The song starts with a background that has a little melodic instrumental on a keyboard, the beat comes only from the voice at this point, but it builds with percussion and drums.

This song retracts an intense expression of personal feelings and experiences, intertwining love, desire and reflections on relationships.

"I'm lost in your smile and I don't want to find myself. I could end up at a loss by not listening. The opinion of those who saw me suffer, dedicate myself. To lost wars, debts that I didn't come to pay." In this initial part of the song, the artist is captivated by the smile of someone special, indicating a state of enchantment that makes him ignore other people's advice and concerns.

He describes a deep connection, which seems to go beyond the physical, although there is also a strong sexual attraction, as evidenced in more explicit verses.

The idea of 'things from other lives' mentioned in the chorus suggests a karmic or predestined connection, reinforcing the depth of what he feels.

It also involves insecurities and emotional vulnerability. Djonga wondered if what he was feeling was real or just a lack.

No matter the outcome of the relationship, repeating the words "Worth the battle" is a mantra of acceptance and gratitude. It recognizes the value of life experiences, even if they don't end in a happy ending in the traditional sense like marriage.

In summary, the song is a true portrait of a man struggling with his emotions and finding beauty and meaning in the emotional journey, not just the destination.

Da lua (feat.Veigh, Lisboa)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hSZCuwksRk>

Talk about the fragile line between love and lack. Even if nothing serious happens, just the passion is worth it. Not everything has to last forever and be an eternal love, like it's shown in most of the movies and fictional histories.

The chorus sung by Lisboa has a unique mood that perfectly aligns with Djonga's words about love and sex without losing sight of the details of a wealthy black man's life. "If I buy flowers for the women I like, imagine what I do for the women I love."

Explores the complexities of a romantic relationship marked by ups and downs, passion and disagreements. The song's lyrics describe a relationship that oscillates between moments of intense connection and periods of distance.

In this song he uses many metaphors and cultural references to illustrate the relationship described in the song. The comparison of the couple with 'Belo and Gracyanne' and the association of 'Hawaiian and floral shirt' are examples of how the artist seeks to convey the idea that, despite the differences, there is a unique harmony between the two.



Belo and Gracyanne (famous brazilian couple)

The mention of 'Japanese wise man and origami' suggests a relationship of care and attention to detail, while the expression 'from the street, from the Moon' shows the duality between reality (street) and dreams (moon), basically between everyday life and the idealized.

In short, it is a song that captures the essence of modern love relationships, with their contradictions and intensities.

Coração gelado (feat. Tz da coronel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUwW5sNLGE4> (Tz da coronel part is from minute 1:56-2:31)

Addresses the theme of romantic disappointment and resistance when dealing with sentimental adversities. The lyrics describe the experience of an individual who, despite

having an 'icy and hard heart', ends up being vulnerable and 'falls into' a passion that leaves him 'a wreck'. The expression 'falls for the story' suggests that the protagonist was deceived, possibly due to unfulfilled promises or expectations in the relationship.

The song's chorus repeats the idea that, even with a hardened and distrustful heart, the individual was emotionally affected. The mention of the 'pennon in the air', can be interpreted as a weapon loaded and ready for use, symbolizes readiness for confrontation and defense, but also vulnerability in situations of emotional intimacy.

The participation of Tz da Coronel adds a perspective that reinforces the idea of resistance and the inevitability of moving forward, even after disappointments (in my opinion that's because of the tone that his voice has). The lyrics talk about exchanging love for a FAL (firearm), a metaphor for the choice to protect yourself and close yourself off emotionally after a negative experience.

Conclusion

As it is an album released in October last year, it has not yet received awards, but according to all the reviews it will have a high chance of winning and competing for awards, this being because it is an innovative album in several aspects. For this same reason, the album probably will leave a long legacy and will serve as an inspiration for many artists to come and those who already work in the area.

