

Gilberto Gil - Gilberto Gil (1968)

Written by bluelover

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01. *Frevo Rasgado* (Gilberto Gil/Bruno Ferreira) - 1:52 02. *Coragem pra Suportar* (Gilberto Gil) - 2:53 03. *Domingou* (Gilberto Gil/Torquato Neto) - 2:54 04. *Marginália II* (Gilberto Gil/Torquato Neto) - 2:39 05. *Pega a Voga, Cabeludo* (Gilberto Gil/Juan Arcon) - 4:43 06. *Êle Falava Nisso Todo Dia* (Gilberto Gil) - 2:32 07. *Procissão* (Gilberto Gil) - 2:54 08. *Luzia Luluza* (Gilberto Gil) - 4:02 09. *Pé da Roseira* (Gilberto Gil) - 3:01 10. *Domingo no Parque* (Gilberto Gil) - 3:41 + 11. *Barca Grande* (Gilberto Gil) - 2:40 12. *A Coisa Mais Linda que Existe* (Gilberto Gil/Torquato Neto) - 3:58 13. *Questão de Ordem* (Gilberto Gil) - 5:31 14. *A Luta contra a Lata ou A Falência do Café* (Gilberto Gil) - 2:47 Personnel: - Gilberto Gil (Gilberto Passos Gil Moreira) - vocals, acoustic guitar - Os Mutantes - performers (01-10,14) - The Beat Boys - performers (13) - Rogério Duprat - arranger, conductor - Manuel Barenbein – producer

When Gilberto Gil's self-titled LP —sometimes referred to as 1968 to differentiate from his 1971 self-titled LP— came out in March of 1968, it marked the start of a revolution. In a year that found counter-cultural uprisings in so many countries, Gil fired an early salvo. Along with his compatriot Caetano Veloso, Gil had been working as one of the driving forces behind a musical movement that would, but a few months later, come to be known as tropicalia.

Based in Bahia in the North-East, the tropicalistas were out to push the Brazilian Popular Music (MPB, in the local Portuguese) into new, experimental directions. So, they drew on Afro-Brazilian folk music, The Beatles, the budding psychedelic movement, and avant-garde composition. Gil's early performances had been, to his dismay, appreciated by the MPB establishment; for him, this was the music of the ruling classes, and, in Brazil's military state, of the dictatorship that had seized control of the country.

So, along with Veloso, he had worked at assembling a tropicalia 'statement,' and that would

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come, mid-'68, with the legendary *Tropicália ou Panis Et Circensis* compilation. But Gil took the sense of revolution to his own music, inviting the movement's wildest charges—the ironic, anarchic, situationist-minded, rock'n'roll-loving young outfit *Os Mutantes*— and working with them on his own album.

Setting *Os Mutantes* manic energy against the rich orchestrations of the arranging overseer of tropicalismo, Rogério Duprat, Gil's '68 LP was the first record to introduce Brazilians to this wild new form of polyglot music; arriving months before the *Tropicália* comp and *Os Mutantes'* self-titled debut. It was the first shot fired in the Brazilian chapter of a global revolution, and the establishment was duly unimpressed.

"Frevo Rasgado" sounds the album in with woodwinds and brass; the flutes fluttering giddy trills, trumpets mirroring Gil's vocals. So far, so sumptuous, but soon things get strange; "Coragem Pra Suportar" scrawling with noisy electric guitar, "Domingou" leaning heavily on *Os Mutantes'* oddball energy and vocal choruses.

As it plays on, there's that constant sense of push/pull between Gil's background and the desires of musical futurism; the LP playing like an inventive suite of sambas delivered with a groovy rock'n'roll touch and marked with strange found-sound flourishes; MPB under assault from experimentation.

At times its just richly, reverently beautiful: "Éle Falava Nisso Todo Dia" a glorious hosanna, drizzled with sweetness; and "Luzia Luluza" pushing a cinematic narrative full of love-song sentiments, wistful airs, and sumptuous orchestrations. Even then, there's something in Rita Lee's vocal counterpoint that's provocative, not placating; there's interjections of staticky radio-broadcasts, and, always, there's subtle political content; the song about escaping reality via dreams, effectively a tribute to remaining hopeful even when held cultural hostage by a military regime.

Famously, the tropicalistas proved too provocative, and Gil and Veloso were twice arrested and jailed by the junta in 1969, and eventually sent unto exile in England in 1970. It's ancient history, of course; Gil would soon return home, and since 1987 has been a popular politician. The cultural agitation of his self-titled is effectively absent for those listening five decades on; now, it just sounds glorious, inventive, and constantly brilliant, one of tropicalia's true masterpieces. --- Anthony Carew, About.com Guide

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