

críticas interessantes do
Editor David A. Porter (NY)
(www.caughtinthecarousel.com)

15 May 2007

Ministério da Cultura - MinC
Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco B
CEP 70068-900
Brasília - Distrito Federal
Attn: Gilberto Gil

RECIBIDO

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Carta CG
E-mail de

Mr. Gil:

Greetings from New York.

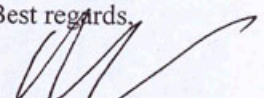
My name is David A. Porter, and I am the Editor at Large for music Web site, **Caught in the Carousel** (www.caughtinthecarousel.com).

I reviewed the Water reissue of your 1971 album, *Gilberto Gil*, and I wanted to send along a copy of my article (enclosed). I loved your record.

If you'd like to see the review online, please visit the following link:

<http://www.caughtinthecarousel.com/ALBUMREVIEWSMENU.html>
(click on the album cover and scroll down)

Best regards,


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cc: Alex Green, Ed. CITC

EXILED + ACOUSTIC

Gilberto Gil

Water 2007 (reissue)

...there were bossa nova collections in existence, but I felt that that was, however wonderful, only an inkling of the vast music riches this country has produced...(Tropicália) shocked Brazilian audiences back in the late '60s early '70s by incorporating rock and funk styles into Brazilian music...Os Mutantes, Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil and the rest.

- David Byrne

Tropicália is the opposite of bossa nova.

- Caetano Veloso

I cannot talk/I only gotta sing/loud, loud/a crazy pop rock.

- Gilberto Gil, "crazy pop rock," from *Gilberto Gil*

SAN FRANCISCO

Two jazz soloists play fresh, contemporary sounds from modern Brazilian folk music.
- from the liner notes to *Jazz Samba*, Stan Getz & Charlie Byrd. April, 1962.

There was a feeling of dissatisfaction – possibly the hint of war to come – and people needed some romance, something dreamy, for distraction. Americans are generally not very curious about the styles of other countries. The Beatles sang rock & roll in English, the common language – they were not really a foreign thing. Our music was Brazilian music in a modern form. It was very pretty, and it was exceptional for managing to infiltrate American music culture.

- Astrud Gilberto, from the liner notes to *Getz/Gilberto* (1997 reissue).

There is neither an American national identity nor an American national culture. To describe oneself as an American is to express something far different, and perhaps much thinner, than to describe oneself as Brazilian, English, Greek, Jamaican or Mexican. Americans are united by borders and laws, and perhaps by our powerful, sophisticated and ubiquitous broadcast and film media, but we are not united by cuisine, by film, by literature, and certainly not by music. A nationality is a shared history – ours is brief, and it is not the history of a single people. American history is a story of immigration and exiles, of modernism. We are more of a potluck than a melting pot.

American popular music, the world's most varied and diverse, is not part of a national consciousness, nor does it help shape an American national identity. Although we have music that is familiar to and loved by millions of Americans, including country, jazz, Motown, Elvis, Sinatra and perhaps show tunes, we do not look to our popular music as something we share as a people, as part of a national consciousness. It is not folk music.

When Justin Timberlake moves a million copies of *FutureSex/LoveSounds*, it means little to me, and when Paris Hilton or Lisa Presley cuts an album, I find myself offended and

reminded that we have become a nation known for its audacity, brutality and vulgarity. I know there are perhaps millions of dots to connect between Paris Hilton and Fallujah, but both enterprises speak to me of brazen fraud, delusion, both self and national, and heartlessness.

A brief and incomplete list of a number of musicians and bands I love right now who are making what I consider "American" music includes Bob Dylan, David Garza, Al Green, Joe Henry, Alicia Keys, Chris Lee, David Mead, Aimee Mann, Marah, Angela McCluskey, Erin Moran ("A Girl Called Eddy"), Matthew Ryan, Michael Shelley, Todd Snider, Bruce Springsteen, Matthew Sweet, Paul Westerberg and Wilco. With the exception of Dylan, Al Green, Keys, Springsteen and maybe Wilco, how many of these artists can sell enough albums in the US to be certified gold?

On April 9, 1993, my friend John Ferguson and I were living in San Francisco, and we drove to the Cow Palace, perhaps one of the worst places on Earth to see live music, to see Nirvana, who were headlining a benefit tour for the rape victims of Bosnia-Herzegovina; the tour also featured Michael Franti's Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, the Breeders and L7, who were playing the final song of their set when we sauntered into the Cow Palace, quite excited and rather high.

Once Nirvana started playing, the floor of the arena became a giant, sweaty mosh pit. When the chorus to "Lithium" kicked in - "...in a daze, 'cause I found God! yeah-yeah-ah-yeah! yeah-yeah-ah-yeah!" - I grabbed the guy next to me by the front of his shirt, he grabbed the front of mine, and we pogo-ed up and down like two of the world's happiest madmen. It was a beautiful moment.

The British are often kinder to American bands than we are, and they are rabid about their own. In England in 1994, when *Definitely Maybe* commenced its ascent of the British charts, it was the bellwether album of Britpop. For the British, Britpop was a cultural and creative phenomenon and a point of national pride. The British have always been devoted to their bands, many of which never even established beachheads on our shores, including legendary acts like Blur, Nick Drake, the English Beat, the Jam, Madness, the Specials, the Stone Roses and Teenage Fanclub. A cursory look at some of the great British acts of our nascent 21st Century acts includes Badly Drawn Boy, Coldplay, the Coral, Franz Ferdinand, The Libertines, Radiohead and Travis. For millions of Britons, these aren't just great bands; they are part of their national identity. These bands belong to them; they are part of an idea of home.

My first limited exposure to Brazilian music was via James Taylor, to whom I've listened since I found him in my mother's record collection while I was still in grade school. I especially loved his 1985 album, *That's Why I'm Here*, which was released when I was a senior in high school. Taylor had recently played at Rock in Rio, a massive annual music festival in Rio de Janeiro, and the album's "Only A Dream in Rio" was an homage to what must have been an incredible event and wonderful trip for Taylor: "strange taste of a tropical fruit/romantic language of the Portuguese/melody on a wooden flute/samba floating in a summer breeze..." Recorded in NY in 1985, the only Brazilian musician

who plays on the song is Brazilian percussionist Airto Moreira, who has also played with Miles Davis, Chick Corea and Stan Getz.

About a decade later, it was Stan Getz and his tenor sax who brought me to Brazilian music and ultimately much deeper into jazz. My friend and next-door neighbor, Don Ciccone, bought me a copy of *Jazz Samba*, recorded by Stan Getz and American jazz guitarist and bossa nova aficionado Charlie Byrd. Originally released in April 1962, *Jazz Samba* was the beginning of the American bossa nova craze. The album is entirely instrumental, and features future standards "Desafinado", a hit single that year, and "Samba de Uma Nota Só," both with music by Jobim and lyrics by Newton Mendonça. *Jazz Samba* ultimately reached the number one position on the US popular album chart, which, according to jazz writer Doug Ramsey, was "unprecedented for a jazz album."

Getz's next foray into bossa nova was *Jazz Samba Encore!*, recorded in February 1963 with bossa novista Luiz Bonfá on guitar and Jobim on piano. *Jazz Samba Encore!* featured three Jobim songs, "Só Danço Samba," "Insensatez," and "O Morro Nao Tem Vez," with lyrics by Brazilian poet Vinicius de Moraes, with whom Jobim had written the soundtrack to *Black Orpheus* (1959).

Getz/Gilberto, was recorded in March of 1963 with Jobim and João Gilberto, one of the founding fathers of bossa nova and a living legend in Brazilian music and jazz to this day. The record featured seven Jobim compositions, including "O Grande Amor," with lyrics by Moraes, "Corcovado (Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars)," with lyrics by American jazz writer Gene Lees, and of course, "The Girl from Ipanema," written by Jobim and Moraes with English lyrics by Norman Gimbel and sung by João Gilberto's first wife, Astrud. "The Girl From Ipanema" was a worldwide hit single in 1963, and Getz/Gilberto was the biggest seller of the *Jazz Samba* albums.

I wanted to live in those albums. To this day, they still sound like broadcasts from a better time. They are still for me, like so much of Brazilian music, the soundtrack to the loveliest of dreams.

For Americans, bossa nova was jet set music, the soundtrack to middle class leisure and sophistication. In Brazil, bossa nova was the most recent evolution of Brazilian folk music and one of the marble slabs that to this day supports the country's cultural identity, and the importance of João Gilberto to Música Popular Brasileiro (MPB) cannot be emphasized enough. Although Caetano Veloso claimed that Tropicália was the opposite of bossa nova, the movement's radicalism was political rather than musical. In Tropical Truth, Veloso describes João Gilberto as his "supreme master," his "Brazilian hero," and his "favorite artist in modern MPB." Gilberto's first LP, the landmark *Chega de Saudade*, from 1959, was the reason Gilberto Gil picked up a guitar. Like João Gilberto, most of the Tropicalistas, including Gal Costa, Gil, Veloso and his younger sister, Maria Bethânia, and Tom Zé were all *Baianos*, from the northeastern state of Bahia.

LIMASSOL

...even today whenever any of us sings "Chega de suadade" – still bossa nova's anthem – in any stadium in Brazil, we are accompanied by a chorus of tens of thousands of voices of all ages singing each syllable and note of the long and rich melody. This would not happen if one were to sing "Blue Suede Shoes," "Roll Over Beethoven" or "Rock Around the Clock."

- Caetano Veloso, Tropical Truth.

The new leaders regarded themselves as the trustees of morality and Christianity... (they) condemned long hair on boys and mini-skirts on girls, and ordered both to go to church... they deprived the celebrated film star, Melina Mercouri, of her citizenship for criticizing them; they banned the songs of Mikis Theodorakis, a leading composer who was also a left wing deputy; and they censored the tragedies and comedies of the classical theater... the reputation of the dictatorship began to be seriously damaged with the widespread allegation of systematic torture practised on political opponents... in spite of obstruction by the Greek government, enough evidence was obtained to leave little doubt that the accusations were true" in fact, they were understated... in 1969 a further investigation was carried out... on behalf of the Council of Europe, which reported that the Greek regime was 'undemocratic, illiberal, authoritarian and oppressive.'

- C.M. Wodehouse, Modern Greece: A Short History.

In 1967 a group of army officers effected a coup in Greece, postponing elections and installing George Papadopoulos, a colonel in the Greek army, as prime minister. The dictatorship repressed activists, censored writers and musicians, and backed a coup against Archbishop Makarios, the beloved president of Cyprus, in 1974. That July, following the coup, the dictatorship "looked the other way" as Turkey invaded Cyprus, beginning an occupation that remains in effect to this day. The arrest, exile and internment of Theodorakis was particularly shameful, since Theodorakis had been part of the Greek resistance during WWII and had composed the soundtrack to *Zorba the Greek*, an Academy Award-winning film directed and produced by Cypriot Michalis Cacoyannis in 1964.

In April of 2004 I flew to Cyprus with my wife, a Greek Cypriot, for her best friend's wedding. The groom, Kyriacos, and I had become fast friends a year earlier, when he and his fiancé traveled to San Francisco to attend my wedding. Kyriacos's bachelor party took place a week before the wedding. We started with dinner around 10 PM in a traditional restaurant in the old section of the city of Limassol, the largest port in Cyprus. By 11 PM a band took the stage near the center of the restaurant, replete with bouzouki and guitars, and began playing. The crowd was a mix of Greek Cypriots of various ages, and everyone knew every song.

We left the restaurant well after midnight for a nightclub a few blocks away. The place was packed, and just about everyone was younger than forty. There was a small, low stage at the front of a room crowded with long tables, and a bar at the back frequented only by waitresses, since it was improbable that you might stand up, leave your table and

battle your way back and forth to the bar. There was a band onstage, and where they remained throughout the night. Three lead singers, two men and a woman, took turns fronting the band, all three of them possessed of the kind of powerful, dramatic voices that soar above the bouzouki and bouncing rhythms of Greek music. Often the last song of one singer's set became a duet with the next singer, who walked to the stage while singing into a wireless microphone. Each set comprised one classic Greek song after another, and just about every single person in the club sang along with every song.

Smashing plates is a thing of the clichéd past, both in Greece and Cyprus and throughout the Greek diaspora – the new tradition is to toss carnations. The waitresses brought baskets of red and white carnations to every table, in between rounds, and young Greek Cypriots, drunk on Heinekens, mixed drinks and hour upon hour of the Greek popular songbook, lobbed them at the stage again and again, until the stage and the floor of the nightclub were littered with flowers. At 5 AM the bar finally closed and groups of friends walked down the quiet, soon-to-brighten streets of Old Limassol, still singing.

LISBON

Is there a greater middle class privilege than travel, especially the Grand Tour? I took my first trip to Europe, also my first adventure with John Ferguson, in the summer of 1992. After crossing the Channel on a sickening ferry ride and sleeping in the rain beneath the intermittent flashlight beams of the Calais police, Fergie and I decided we could no longer wait to unpeel in the Mediterranean sun. We took the train from Calais to Paris and hopped a flight to Lisbon where, that same afternoon, we hung our drenched sleeping bags on the railing of the of our balcony; it turned out we were across the street and high above the Coliseu, an old Lisbon theater and the city's main performance hall. That night the Coliseu was host to David Byrne, who was touring behind his second solo album, *Uh-Oh*, and his band featured a number of Brazilian musicians. A hasty currency exchange, two floor seats and a lot of cheap Portuguese wine ensued, about 100 escudos per bottle, and we stumbled into the sold-out Coliseu, carrying a bottle of wine we hadn't consumed during our afternoon drunk on the streets of Lisbon. No one patted us down at the door or checked our passports. It was a level of civilization theretofore unknown to us. We were astonished.

The Coliseu is shaped like an octagon, with rows of wooden seats bolted to a wooden floor and boxes rising straight up the walls to the ceiling, the flat geometry and perfect acoustics of an earlier time when people simply stood on wooden stages and sang. The lights went off and the entire theater went dark. People hooted and whistled, and the air was full of cigarette smoke and hash. A pinpoint spot illuminated a small circle just right of center stage, and Byrne walked onto the stage wearing black and carrying an acoustic guitar and a boom box. He set the small stereo on the stage and pressed 'play,' and the beat from "Psycho Killer" echoed throughout the high wooden box of the Coliseu. Byrne stepped forward and began his syncopated strumming: "I can't seem to face up to the facts!"

From then on he had us on our feet and in his clutches. With each of the first few songs, musicians joined Byrne onstage, until a full ten-piece band had arranged itself behind

him. Byrne bounced back and forth between his solo material, including selections from his 1989 solo debut, *Rei Momo*, and Talking Heads songs. People were standing and drinking and dancing throughout the entire show. We shared our wine with the couple in front of us, and they passed back a cigarette stuffed with hash.

By the end of the show, everyone was singing and shouting, pounding on chairs and stomping on the floor. Byrne came out for an encore and played a Portuguese folk song, something called "When the Fish Farts," and the Coliseu erupted. Everyone knew every word, and they jumped up and down and sang along. When Byrne finished his encore and left the stage, we continued pounding the chairs and stomping our feet for about five minutes, until the lights came on and we relented. Beneath the bright house lights, we left the theater smiling and shouting, a few empty wine bottles skating across the floor as we exited.

According to *The Economist*, Brazil ranked thirteenth in the world in 2003 for "music sales," which includes cassettes, CDs, DVDs, vinyl and video. However, Brazil doesn't rank among the top thirty nations for annual book sales or for newspaper copies sold per 1000 people. By comparison, Mexico is eleventh on the list for music sales and fifth on the list for book sales, but it doesn't appear on the "Daily newspapers" list, while Germany is ranked fifth for music sales, third for book sales and ninth for daily newspapers. Brazil and South Africa are the only third world countries to appear on the music sales list.

While smaller nations can't compete with the buying power of the larger industrialized nations, the list for per capita spending for music sales is topped by Norway, with Iceland at number three and Qatar at number four; Ireland and Portugal are also included on the per capita list at twelve and twenty, respectively.

BRASÍLIA

I've never seen a more corrupt, more bureaucratic country than ours.

- Antonio Carlos Jobim

...many people were jailed and seized simply for suspicion; books that were considered subversive were burned by the agencies of state repression...professors, intellectuals, journalists and even some military officers were dismissed from their jobs. All means of communication were subject to state censorship. Anyone could be charged with treason on the basis of national security. Many musicians and artists were forced to leave the country...

- Antonio Pedro Tota, "The Military Regime." [The Brazil Reader](#).

The era of Brazil's military dictatorship began in 1964 with the ascension of General Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco to the presidency after a bloodless coup undertaken by the military, which alleged that President Joao Goulart, a populist and reformist, had planned a communist takeover of the government. Political and cultural repression accelerated under General Artur da Costa e Silva, Castelo Branco's successor, and reached its zenith under General Emilio Garrastazu Medici. Many political prisoners

were tortured under Medici, the most brutal of the military presidents, and many prisoners disappeared. In 1974, General Ernesto Geisel commenced the gradual relaxation of the dictatorship, which concluded in 1979 with the election of military president João Baptista Figueiredo and the restoration of political rights to the opposition, amnesty for political prisoners and exiles, and the reestablishment of a free press. On October 5, 1988, Brazil ratified a new constitution.

The right, in whatever nation and whatever its permutation – fascist regime, military dictatorship, Republican administration – always aligns itself against artists, intellectuals, musicians, students and writers, and always with the dominant corporate and religious interests. Is it any wonder here in the US that during our darkest, most shameful hour, we are consistently deceived and humiliated by one of the most anti-intellectual and right wing presidents in our history?

The right is always devoted to the obfuscation of truth. Thirty-seven million Americans currently live in poverty, many of them children who will grow up malnourished and illiterate in the wealthiest nation in the world, while we pump billions of dollars into an illegal war fought largely against poor Arabs, in an invasion with obvious and frightening parallels to Hitler's march into Poland in 1939. In 2003, prior to the war, everyone on the left knew Iraq had neither chemical nor nuclear weapons, and certainly not in any stockpiles sufficient enough to justify our invasion and devastation of that country, which we may perhaps now describe as an annexation.

In much the same way that the military dictatorship benefited the elite of Brazil, the Bush administration continues to better the position of our privileged classes while sending our poor to die in Iraq, with obvious and frightening parallels to Vietnam. Veloso writes in Tropical Truth, "within the family or among one's circle of friends, there was no possibility of anyone's sanely disagreeing with a socialist ideology. The right existed only to serve vested or unspeakable interests."

According to the CIA *World Fact Book*, 2007 online version, the current population of Brazil is approximately 190 million. About 9% of Brazilians are unemployed, and 31% of them live below the poverty line (2005). In its Millennium Development goals project for developing nations, the World Bank reports that as of 2001, the poorest 20% of Brazilians held a 2.4% share of income or consumption, while 8.2% of Brazilians were living on less than \$1 per day – according to the BBC, this number was approximately 46M in 2003. Also according to the BBC, in 2002 Brazil carried the world's largest foreign debt.

SÃO PAULO

Led by Veloso and Gil, the Tropicalista group included Tom Zé, Gal Costa, Torquato Neto, and José Carlos Capinam – most of them also from Bahia – along with Os Mutantes, an experimental rock group...the Tropicalistas updated the metaphor of *antropofagia*, first outlined in Oswald de Andrade's Cannibalist Manifesto (1928), which advocated 'devouring' the cultural heritage of dominant nations and creating a radical anti-colonialist blueprint for Brazilian cultural production...the Tropicalistas produced

allegorical songs that underscored the historical contradictions of their society by juxtaposing images of violence and poverty with familiar national mythologies associated with the idea of Brazil as a tropical paradise.

- Christopher Dunn, "Tropicalism and Brazilian Popular Music under Military Rule." The Brazil Reader.

Tropicalismo wanted to project itself as the triumph over two notions: one, that the version of the Western enterprise, offered by American pop and mass culture was potentially liberating – though we recognized that a naïve attraction to that version is a healthy impulse – and, two, the horrifying humiliation represented by capitulation to the narrow interests of dominant groups, whether at home or internationally. It was also an attempt to face up to the apparent coincidence, in this tropical country, of a countercultural wave emerging at the same time as the vogue in authoritarian regimes.

- Caetano Veloso, Tropical Truth.

Tropicália opposed both the military dictatorship and a class system circumscribed by one of the world's greatest discrepancies between wealthy and poor. "As we reached adolescence," Veloso writes, "my generation dreamed of inverting this brutal legacy." Tropicália was punk in its aims but hippie in its execution. The Tropicalistas were artists, intellectuals and hippies, Gil the most cosmic amongst them, as demonstrated by some of the lyrics from *Gilberto Gil*: "the last mushroom makes room for the unknown/I get inside the secret room" and "such an idea brings a moon beam/such a floating light thread/hangs on my little cabin, lonely cabin/my lunar Volkswagen cabin." The Tropicalistas, especially Gil, were enamored of the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix, and they were inspired by the counterculture movements of the Sixties, especially by the emphasis of these movements on artistic experimentation and defiance of class systems.

Tropicalism sought to renovate MPB, to incorporate American and British folk and rock elements into the breezy melodicism of bossa nova, not to obliterate it. The Os Mutantes version of "Baby," from the band's first album, *Os Mutantes* (also available on the 1999 Luaka Bop compilation *Everything is Possible*), sounds just as sweet and lovely as Bebel Gilberto's version on her self-titled second album from 2004. At its hardest edges, Os Mutantes' music sounds like early Santana, but the gentler songs are reminiscent of the Mamas and the Papas and even the Fifth Dimension, although more psychedelic and not as glossy. The Tropicalistas' American counterparts might have been the Doors and the Velvet Underground, two psychedelic and hyper-literate Sixties bands. Both bands created seminal, wholly original pop music that surprised audiences and brought the demimonde of late Sixties American culture into view.

Tropicalism was Brazilian culture's blow against the empire, a strike at the monolith of American culture, which by the late Sixties had already wrapped its muscular, pungent shadow around the globe. The Tropicalistas appropriated some aspects of American popular music and walked away from the rest, folding electric guitars, rock n'roll beats and psychedelic keyboard flourishes into MPB but without embracing rock n'roll itself. By doing so, the Tropicalistas redefined MPB and drove it into the future. This idea of renovation, of reaching back to the past, remains today one of the pillars of MPB.

LONDON

By this time, it had become clear to the military authorities under Castelo Branco's hard-line successor, Artur Costa e Silva, that the Tropicalistas' critiques of Brazilian society were potentially subversive. Soon after the promulgation of the draconian Fifth Institutional Act on December 13, 1968, which suspended habeas corpus, Gil and Veloso were arrested in their São Paulo apartments (December 27, 1968), and later exiled to London.

- Christopher Dunn, "Tropicalism and Brazilian Popular Music under Military Rule." The Brazil Reader.

Suadade. One of the first things you learn in Brazil is that the word suadade (sow-dah-djee) is ubiquitous and untranslatable. It means, roughly, longing, yearning, sadness, something akin to homesick.

- Gene Lees, Liner notes, *Antonio Carlos Jobim, The Man From Ipanema*.

Stable, tranquil and insuperably fashionable, the English capital, for all its Nordic, non-Latin strangeness and its insufferable climate, seemed our most rational solution...those years were a cloudy dream.

- Caetano Veloso, Tropical Truth.

I have a strange karma with London. It brings me concentration and focus. There's a feeling in London that makes me lonely, yet complete.

- Bebel Gilberto

Gil met Jimi Hendrix before Hendrix died in London on September 18, 1970. In Tropical Truth, Veloso discusses the influence Hendrix had on Gil's guitar playing, and how Gil in turn changed Brazilian guitar music:

"His guitar style, born out of bossa nova and reworked through his attention to Jorge Ben and his objective of reinventing the Northeastern *baião* and melody, found in Hendrix's avant-garde blues the key to what would constitute a new milestone in the history of the guitar among us, leading me to consider...that the genealogy might be Dorival Caymmí, João Gilberto, Jorge Ben, and finally Gil. Gil...was in love with Hendrix. In fact, he had felt such passion for someone else's music only twice before – for Jorge Ben and the Beatles, and no one else."

Gil recorded *Gilberto Gil* in 1971, toward the end of his second winter in London. According to Veloso, while in exile Gil "studied earnestly, met musicians, and went to a lot of concerts." "That's the way life is," Gil said in a 2003 interview with Sue Steward of *The Observer*. "You move from one state of things to another."

The following is a list of records released in late 1970 and early 1971 that establishes a context for *Gilberto Gil* and suggests what Gil might have heard on the radio or purchased in the record shops of London while in exile. I have provided the month of release where possible. Most fans of American and British popular music will admit that

1970 and 1971 were extraordinary years for music, given some of the monumental and watershed albums on this list:

1970

- *Abbey Road*, The Beatles. 26 September 1969.
- *Abraxas*, Santana. September.
- *After the Gold Rush*, Neil Young. August.
- *All Things Must Pass*, George Harrison. 27 November.
- *American Beauty*, The Grateful Dead. November.
- *Atom Heart Mother*, Pink Floyd. 5 October.
- *Band of Gypsies*, Jimi Hendrix.
- *Black Sabbath*, Black Sabbath. May.
- *Bridge Over Troubled Water*, Simon & Garfunkel. February.
- *Bryter Layter*, Nick Drake.
- *Déjà Vu*, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. 11 March.
- *John Barleycorn Must Die*, Traffic. January.
- *John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band*, John Lennon. 11 December.
- *Ladies of the Canyon*, Joni Mitchell. April.
- *Layla & Other Assorted Love Songs*, Derek & The Dominos. November.
- *Led Zeppelin III*, Led Zeppelin. 5 October.
- *Let It Be*, The Beatles. 8 May.
- *Lola vs. the Powerman & the Money-Go-Round, Part One*, The Kinks. 27 November.
- *McCartney*, Paul McCartney. 20 April.
- *New Morning*, Bob Dylan. 21 October.
- *Sweet Baby James*, James Taylor. February.
- *Tea for the Tillerman*, Cat Stevens. November.
- *Tide*, Antonio Carlos Jobim. May.

1971

- *Caetano Veloso*, Caetano Veloso.
- *Construção*, Chico Buarque, 1971.
- *Electric Warrior*, T-Rex.
- *Every Picture Tells A Story*, Rod Stewart.
- *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, The Moody Blues.
- *Gets Next To You*, Al Green.
- *Gonna Take a Miracle*, Laura Nyro.
- *Imagine*, John Lennon. 9 September.
- *The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys*, Traffic. January.
- *Mud Slide Slim and the Blue Horizon*, James Taylor. April.
- *Muswell Hillbillies*, The Kinks. 24 November.
- *Ram*, McCartney. 17 May.
- *Paranoid*, Black Sabbath. January.
- *Sticky Fingers*, The Rolling Stones, 23 April.

- *Teaser and the Firecat*, Cat Stevens, October 1971.
- *What's Going On*, Marvin Gaye. 20 May.
- *Where I'm Coming From*, Stevie Wonder, 12 April.
- *Who's Next*, The Who.
- *Young, Gifted & Black*, Aretha Franklin.

Gilberto Gil is an album of acoustic hippie bops that bring to mind the Beatles, Richie Havens, a jazzed up Cat Stevens or a more swinging version of early Joni Mitchell records. Bassist Chris Bonnett is Gil's sole accompanist on the album's eight songs, seven of them Gil's own compositions. The only cover on the album is Gil's version of Blind Faith's "Can't Find My Way Home," and it is a passionate and poignant performance. There are echoes of Donovan, but Gil's songs are simpler in their execution and production. George Harrison comes to mind, but imagine his demos as sung by Al Jarreau, with a bossa nova lilt and melodies as sweet as the Mamas and the Papas version of "Dream a Little Dream of Me." The joy inherent in Gil's singing belies that he recorded the album while in exile, and his vocals on this album are reminiscent of Ella Fitzgerald and the first Crosby, Stills & Nash album, with intermittent scating on some songs that reminds me again of Ella, of João Gilberto, and even of Mel Tormé. When Gil hits some of the higher notes, he sounds a bit like Al Stewart. Veloso writes in Tropical Truth of first seeing on TV, in 1962 or 1963, "a young black man singing and playing guitar like the best of the bossa novistas. His exuberant musicality, his perfect pitch, his rhythm and fluency thrilled me."

Gilberto Gil is an album that achieves the aims of Tropicalismo, in that it cannibalizes the best of American and British pop. However, by choosing to sing in English, Gil stepped into the burgeoning milieu of Anglo-American folk rock, ultimately freeing himself on *Gilberto Gil* from the idioms of both traditional MPB and Tropicalismo.

Gilberto Gil is a true music lover's record, dazzling and delightful from its first play; you may not hear a lovelier, more exuberant album released this year. The Water reissue of *Gilberto Gil* features a short set of three songs recorded live in London: "Can't Find My Way Home," "Up From the Skies," and "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." All three are delightful and inspired versions, with Gil chatting in Portuguese between each song.

This record is a cloudy dream, the work of a virtuoso. Listening to Gil, it's easy to assign him to a category that includes Jobim, Marley, McCartney, Joni Mitchell and Paul Weller – it seems as if he is made of music. In his 2003 collection of essays about popular music, Songbook, Nick Hornby describes Paul Westerberg as "a born musician...just a man who thinks and feels and loves and speaks in music." We can without reservation say the same of Gil.

Gil has recorded about fifty albums since his first, *Louvação*, in 1967, and a ridiculously brief and incomplete list of the artists with whom he has recorded includes Jorge Ben, Jimmy Cliff, Carlos Fonseca, Bebel Gilberto, João Gilberto, the I-Threes, Marisa Monte, Milton Nascimento and Caetano Veloso. Gil fell in love with Bob Marley while in exile,

and in 2001 he recorded a reggae version of the Beatles' "Something" with Milton Nascimento for *Gilberto Gil & Milton Nascimento* (perhaps taking his cue from Peter Tosh's cover of "Here Comes the Sun"). In 2002, Gil and his band made a pilgrimage to Tuff Gong studios in Kingston, Jamaica, where he recorded *Kaya N'Gan Daya*, an album of Bob Marley covers (and a few originals) with the I-Threes. In January 2003, Brazil's leftist president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a former factory worker and leader of the Workers' Party, named Gil Culture Minister.

RIO DE JANEIRO

The Tropicalistas renovated Brazilian popular music, while simultaneously making incisive critiques of the political and social dilemmas of Brazilian society. It still serves as a key reference point for artists interested in formal experimentation and creative engagement with cultural products from abroad.

- Christopher Dunn, "Tropicalism and Brazilian Popular Music under Military Rule." Brazil Reader.

It is great to see that bossa nova can be rejuvenated, this makes it eternal.

- Roberto Menescal. Liner notes to *Uma Batida Diferente*, Bossacucanova.

The renovation of bossa nova initiated by the Tropicalistas continues today. 21st Century Brazilian music has embraced electronica, combining new beats and sonic textures with classic bossas. While electronica has changed music worldwide, Brazilian artists such as Bossacucanova, Cibelle and Bebel Gilberto have cut wonderful records that blend traditional Brazilian music with electronica, while Zuco 103, a Brazilian band based in Amsterdam, has crafted a version of Brazilian music that's closer to modern dance music than it is to bossa nova. There are also the "new traditionalists," a group of singers that includes Marisa Monte, Mariana de Moraes and Rosa Passos, who are recording new material alongside updated versions of classic songs, and of course the members of the MPB old guard – Costa, Gil, Nascimento, Veloso, even Sergio Mendes, to name a scant few – are still putting out records. Today, as always, even with the introduction of electronica, Brazilian music is about virtuosity. As with Greek music, or reggae, Brazilian artists record classic songs again and again, so each performance draws careful attention to the song's arrangement, the instrumentation, the vocals and phrasing, the overall musicianship, since the songs themselves are as familiar as lullabies.

Where to start? Putumayo has issued five Brazilian compilations, *Acoustic Brazil*, *Brasileiro*, *Brazilian Groove*, *Brazilian Groove* and *Samba Bossa Nova*. Any of these albums is a great place to start, as is *Getz/Gilberto*. These are the records that served as my embarkation point, but there are myriad Brazilian compilations available – any door will take you into a wonderful room.

As you travel further, Bebel Gilberto, Joao's daughter, has made some great records. On *Tanto Tempo* (2000), she covers "So Nice (Summer Samba)," originally written by Marcus Valle and Paul Sergio Valle (with English lyrics by Norman Gimbel), which was a Top 40 hit for Valle in the US. On this year's *Momento*, which was just released, Bebel covers her uncle, Chico Buarque, on "Caçada" and Cole Porter on "Night and Day." In a

nod to the Tropicalistas, Bebel writes on her Web site that the title of one of her new songs, "Os Novos Yorkinos," "is an homage to the 70's Brazilian band Novos Baianos (New Bahians) who played Brazilian funk, rock and psychedelia."

Marisa Monte is one of the giants of modern MPB. Her 1994 album, *Rose and Charcoal* (Metro Blue/Capitol) was produced by Arto Lindsay, formerly of the Ambitious Lovers, and features Gilberto Gil on acoustic guitar on four songs. Monte also covers Jorge Ben's "Balança Pema," and sings a superlative version of "Pale Blue Eyes." This is an expertly crafted album performed by a great singer with crack accompaniment.

Bossacucanova is a Rio electronica trio featuring bassist Márcio Menescal, the son of bossa novista guitarist Roberto Menescal, who joins the band on 2001's *Brasilidade* (Six Degrees). The album features a Jobim instrumental, "Surfboard," and "Água de Beber," by Jobim and Moraes. On 2004's *Uma Batida Diferente*, the trio covers Chico Buarque's "Essa Moça Tá Diferente" and Buarque and Veloso's "Vai Levendo." The gentlemen of Bossacucanova return again to Jobim on this release, which features "Águas de Março" and "Bonita," written by Jobim with Gene Lees and Ray Gilbert. The song "Queria," written with Marcos Valle, features Valle on vocals and keyboard.

I've spent a lot of time with Cibelle's self-titled album from 2003. Cibelle's voice is lovely, a bit sultry, and her songs lean more toward modern lounge and chill than they do toward bossa nova or American pop. The one Jobim outing on *Cibelle* is "Inútil Paisagem," with Portuguese lyrics by Aloysio de Oliveira and English lyrics by Ray Gilbert.

Mariana de Moraes released her self-titled debut on del sol Records in 2000, and although it's a bit obscure it's worth hunting down. This is a quiet album reminiscent of *Getz/Gilberto*, *In The Wee Small Hours of the Morning* and *Francis Albert Sinatra and Antonio Carlos Jobim*. Moraes is the granddaughter of the legendary Vinicius de Moraes, and she covers his "Medo de Amar" and Jobim's "Fotografia." She also sings "Como Vou Frazer" with Dois Irmãos on the Putumayo *Brazilian Groove* compilation. She's a delicate vocalist, in the tradition of Astrud Gilberto or Blossom Dearie.

When Tower Records went bankrupt and finally shut its doors last year, I joined the legions of the undead and picked through as much of the place as I could. A lot of Six Degrees albums were available, even toward the fabled chain's final hours, and I purchased two Zuco 103 albums, *Whaa!* (2005) and *Tales of High Fever* (2002). Zuco 103 is a Brazilian electronica trio from Amsterdam, and their music is closer to club and dance music than it is to bossa nova or chill. Lead vocalist Lilian Vieira has a big voice, and it holds up in a lot of beat-heavy songs. *Whaa!* begins with an electronica samba, "Na Mangueira," a song about Estação Primavera de Mangueira, "one of Rio's most revered samba schools," where "joy has no hour and sadness has no place." Roberto Menescal guests on the song "Nhá," while Lee Scratch Perry contributes lyrics and vocals to "Love is Queen Omega" and "It's a Woman's World." It's a collaboration that might take its inspiration from Tropicalismo and probably from Gil himself. He'd certainly approve.

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