

**"Gil believes in God.
I believe in Gil."**

Caetano Veloso

"When Gilberto Gil told me that he dreamed of making an intimate album with voice and guitar," writes author Bené Fonteles, "I imagined this CD packaged with the book I was writing about him, 'GiLuminoso': a po.ética do ser', which was released in 1999. Now we can hear the sound of Gilberto Gil, almost naked, in the living rooms of those of us who love him and we also hear his muse, the music."

Culled from over thirty-five years of songwriting, Gil Luminoso is the only recording from Brazilian musical legend Gilberto Gil to be recorded exclusively with solo acoustic guitar and voice. The fifteen songs selected for this album date back as far back as the end of the Tropicália era in 1969 and move through Gil's repertoire until the late 1990s, lingering with particular attention on his songwriting of the 1970s.

Over three days in a small studio in Rio de Janeiro, Gil and Fonteles sifted through a lifetime of exceptional music in search of those songs that would have just the right mix of sonic richness and intimacy. Fonteles says that the pair were seeking songs "immersed in the same breathe of fresh air" that Gil's work had brought to the consciousness of a generation of Brazilians and that often had life-changing consequences for the listeners.

The songs they selected, presented here without instrumental ornamentation or elaborate arrangements, gain another dimension in which the self-relevatory power of each song is cast in high relief. Fonteles recalls, "Gil revisited each of these songs with the mastery of a wise man. Sensitive artisan that he is, he reweave each song knot by knot - without knotting up our minds - the same minds that learned from Gil not to lie to ourselves, to explode not only the frontiers between the erudite and the popular but also the barriers between the East and the West."

Rarely can a pop music artist can imbue his or her work with such dense philosophical and spiritual meaning, with such subtlety and strength, as Gil has done during the past four decades. During this time, he has produced not only an unparalleled body of music, but has marvelously crafted songs that are the fitting partner to a voice in a tender state of grace. It is a voice that routinely breaks free from its

bonds, challenges authority and fearlessly delivers the most profound message whether with a whisper and or with a cry. On that most ubiquitous of Brazilian instruments, the guitar, Gil has few equals in his ability to make his instrument resonate with the soul. He effortlessly creates a sound that can be earthy or ethereal, drawing from an ample palette of influences – from the percussive roots of his African ancestry to the troubador modality that comes out of Brazil's vast northern desert; from a singer-songwriter's familiar repertoire of chords to elegant five tone structures borrowed from Eastern musical traditions.

Here on this CD we hear Gilberto Gil, in total artistic vulnerability, illuminate the mysteries of his music that has captured listeners for decades. As Fonteles writes, Gil Luminoso distills the essence of this phenomenal musician-philosopher, "...Gil, naked with his calm voice. Gil alone with his guitar: extension of a soul of immense generosity".

Tracy Mann

"Preciso aprender a só ser"
(I need to learn how to just be)

Released as a single in 1973, this existential samba-canção was recorded as an esthetic response to the hit song of the time, "Preciso aprender a ser só" (I need to learn how to be alone) by Marcos Valle and Paulo Sérgio Valle.

"Aqui e Agora"
(Here and Now)

Originally recorded on the album Refavela in 1977, an album written after an epiphonal trip Gil made to Lagos, Nigeria, that brought a distinctive West African influence into his songwriting. His lyrics continued to evolve on a spiritual trajectory: "The best place in the world is here and now/Here, some place undefined/Now, which is almost when/When to be light or heavy/Doesn't make sense".

"Retiros Espirituais"
(Spiritual Retreats)

Originally recorded on the album Refazenda in 1975, the first album of the "Re" trilogy that included Refazenda, Refavela and Realce. "On my spiritual retreats," writes Gil, "I discover certain things that are so

banal/How having problems can be the same as resolving not to have them/Resolve to have them is to resolve to have to ignore them/You must find it funny/To have to resolve both sides/Of my equation"

"O Seu Amor"
(Your Love)

Written for "Os Doces Barbaros", the super-group made up of Gil, Caetano Veloso, Gal Costa and Maria Bethânia in 1976. The song recycles the motto of the Brazilian military dictatorship "Brazil: Love it or leave it" with a more libertarian approach "your love/ love it and let it be free to love".

"Tempo Rei"
(King Time)

Originally recorded on the album "Raça Humana" in 1984. The only song on the album written on electric guitar talks about transforming old ways of living: "Don't be deceived/I don't deceive myself/Everything right now/Could be/Could be only for a second"

"O Som da Pessoa"
(One Person's Sound)

Co-written with author Bené Fonteles in 1999 for the release of the book and album package. The lyrics are the text of a poem written by Gil for a magazine called Grain of Rice that was the publication of a well-known macrobiotic restaurant in Salvador, Bahia.

"Copo Vazio"
(Empty Cup)

Originally recorded by Chico Buarque for the album Sinal Fechado in 1974. Gil says that when Chico asked him to write a song for him he thought, "Oh my God – how can I write a song for Chico? That night, when everyone had gone to bed, I got my guitar, lit a cigarette, poured some wine into a cup and started thinking. When I looked, the cup was empty. But it was full of air. So I wrote, 'it's always good to remember/that an empty cup is full of air'. This is pop philosophy, I thought. Chico will like it."

"Cerebro Eletrônico"
(Electronic Brain)

Unlike any of the other songs on the album, this song was one of the four that Gil composed while he was a political prisoner in Rio in 1969 and is considered part of the canon of Tropicália. The song describes an Orwellian world in which Gil seeks meaning for the individual.

"A Raça Humana"
(The Human Race)

From the album of same name, released in 1984. "The human race is a work of God's work. The human race is a burning wound/A beauty/A decay/An eternal flame and death/Death and resurrection."

"Você e Você"
(You and You)

"Você e Você" (You and You) uses the imagery of the I-Ching to represent the internal contradiction of the individual: "you attack to defend yourself/you kiss the canvas in order to win". This song was recorded by Gal Costa on her 1993 release *O Sorriso do Gato de Alice*. (The Smile of Alice's Cat) and is Gil's first recording of the song.

"Super-homen - a canção"
(Superman - the song)

Originally recorded on the album *Realce* in 1979. This song denounces the Nietzschean vision of gender and pays tribute to the strength and life-giving force of the feminine. "Who knows if Superman/Can reinstate the glory/Changing like a god the course of history/Because of Woman".

"Rebento"
(Offspring)

Originally recorded on the album *Realce* in 1979. The word "rebento" doesn't translate perfectly in English. Gil calls "rebento" something "substantially abstract...an act, a creation, a moment like a star/Rebento, this bolt of thunder inside of me and the immensity of sound of this moment."

"Metáfora"
(Metaphor)

Originally recorded on the album Um Banda Um in 1982. Gil's superb wordplay asks the listener to refrain from judging the choices of metaphor that a poet may make: "A tin can exists to contain something but when the poet uses the word "tin can" he may mean what can't be contained."

"Meditação"
(Meditation)

Originally recorded on the album Refazenda in 1975. The circular lyric plays with delineating the boundaries of oneself and the world. "Everything in yourself/Even what's outside/What's outside yourself/Even if it's faraway/And even from here on out/From yourself/Ad infinitum".

"O Compositor me Disse"
(The Composer Told Me)

This song was written for Brazil's great singer Elis Regina. Gil told her that the song was basically meant to be whispered, not sung. In the lyrics the composer tells the singer, "I should sing as if the wind blew in my mouth from my lungs/I should stand to the side and listen to the wind/Tossing the words in the air". Gil recorded the song on a little-known live album in 1974.