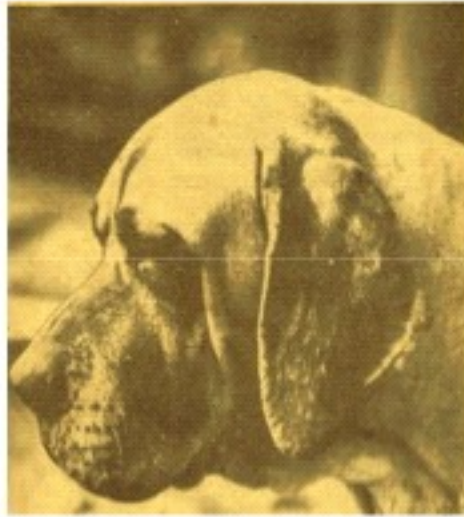


# The Fila Brasileiro Breed Manifesto

manifesto



WE ARE RE-ISSUING THIS MANIFESTO IN FACE OF THE NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION!!



Zumba de Parnapuan

## ***Preserving the Fila Brasileiro – A Matter of Principals!***

*by Antonio Carlos Linhares Borges*

*This manifesto is addressed to all those who somehow can be responsible for breeding the Fila Brasileiro, and for the maintenance of this breed, domestically and abroad, as well as to hobbyists and enthusiasts. What motivates me especially; more than the simple fact of being a Fila breeder, is being a Brazilian with high esteem for it. This was the sentiment that certainly led me to embrace the cause of conserving this genetic heritage, capable of marveling so many around the world for its extraordinary talents.*

*For over 30 years I have been studying and trying to understand the mysteries of the origin of this dog, of its creation in our national territory, and the characteristics that we understand as being unique, particularly inside the world of show dogs.*

*My interest in the preservation and knowledge of the Breed, was awakened by the advent of Cafib lead by Santos Cruz, with whom I learned the beginnings of preservation promotion. With the help of friends, and scholars, aficionados, and often simply admirers and owners of farms that have long bred and raised [the Fila] in their families for many years, I traveled thousands of miles through country roads and secondary roads, I personally photographed, filmed and watched those wonderful dogs at work, in action and in their habitat.*

*I sought out books, teachers of the genetics of dog breeding, of dog sciences, I studied the history, geography, Folk customs of the countryside of Minas Gerais during many late nights - talked and*

*asked questions. I learned something, though much of the mystery still remains, and perhaps will remain forever.*

*At all times, I never settled for the attempted dilapidation this heritage, and sought by the release of my book "Cao Fila Brasileiro – A Preservacao do Original" [The Fila Brasileiro Dog – Preservation of the Original] to pass along some guidelines for new breeders about what to preserve and what not to allow to sneak into their breeding programs.*

*Upon finishing the book, I had in Eugenio Henrique de Lucena's testimony; the former president of CBKC - Confederação Brasileira de Cinofilia, evidence that the introduction of other breeds in the Fila breed (cross-breeding) was in fact an undeniable reality: "... Since no one hesitated to introduce the bloodlines of other breeds, for example: searching for greater more size, [with] Great Danes, or mass and bone structure by using the Mastiff, the Neapolitan Mastiff and the St. Bernard. This unqualified practice was directly responsible for the lack of homogeneity found currently within the breed and the object of heavy criticism from foreign officials that visited us" (pag. 7). This is a declaration that we can consider to be an official declaration from the CBKC.*

*Moving away a little from the show dogs circuit due to personal affairs after the book release, until recently, I thought that the period of the ostentatiously atypical dogs having signs of the criminal crossbreeding that ravaged our breed, would have passed.*

*Also, recently, I was concerned about finding a way to contribute to the enhancement of the Fila Brasileiro, in order to eliminate small defects of type and select desirable characteristics. A job that led me to find and socialize with friends that I cherish; who I both respect and admiration for their dedication and success in breeding in the Unifila Club.*

*However, prompted by other combatants against crossbreeding - which I thought exaggerated in their position, or that they could be outdated, very recently - I found myself seized with fright, to receive photos of dogs of this era, so distorted from the original breed type; to point of almost not believing the official dog club (CBKC) would still enable and reward so many aberrations [freaks of nature]. We know that the human hand can alter breeds of their animals, imprinting characteristics at their whim. But we can never overlook that the ethics of preservation should prevail when it comes to historical heritage. It is not up for any agency created to support breeders to break with this ethos. What is fitting, rather, is the responsibility of maintaining this heritage untouched, out of respect for the people who produced it.*

*The Fila Brasileiro, as well as other national native breeds, does not belong to any [organized] group established for its breeding, but only to its country, its history and its saga of survival alongside the men who came to build this country. It is the duty of these so called official show dog agencies, represented by the CBKC, to respect the breed. The Ministerio da Agricultura [Ministry of Agriculture], should in fact, as it happens in other countries, take over their responsibilities to this heritage that came from the farms in Minas. Unfortunately, it does not and by that, disregards the importance of the cultural aspect that the Fila represents. By failure in doing so and avoiding this responsibility, these entities leave us few options - we breeders and hobbyists – but to express our reprisal about the situation represented in the environment of show dogs. Which is certainly still very little, because we cannot be satisfied only by expressing our discontent. This mistake cannot become truth by virtue of formalization.*

*We must react vigorously against the squandering of assets, not allowing that grotesque changes in the breed standard become established as true. If it were not a matter of preservation, would the "New Filas" be the result of apathetic improvement, devoid of knowledge about dogs and inadequate for performing of the job for which its proposes was for; of sometimes pachyderm-like*

*dwarf legged deformities or monsters drowning in disfiguring double chins or sometimes tall legged having no support on the ground. Not knowing where to get with the production of these exotic specimens, shockingly different from the original natural and useful ones, so exquisitely designed by nature and from working alongside colonial farmers.*

*If they are raising exotic animals, then there should be transparency from breeder groups which are accountable to the dog breeding world (FCI) - recognizing them as a novelty, distinguishing them from the original animal and who knows, even by starting to establish a standard by itself. What would not be unprecedented nor absurd; because we have an example in what happened with the Mangalarga equine breed, which suffered similar intervention of experimenter-breeders and were crossbred with various foreign breeds and came to generate the Mangalarga and the Mangalarga Marchador; separating the exotic from the original (Marchador). Precedents also exist in dog breeding, as is the case of the reaction of the Japanese, which were forced to separate the breed standard into Akita and the American Akita, altered until they became unrecognizable by breeders of origin.*

*What we cannot do in any way is admit the tower of Babel; the multiplicity of types, as the representation of the breed. Thus, yes, reason to become the laughing stock of the entire show dog world; that is, if they are even wanting to "appear to be" something.*

*Here I take the liberty of considering myself qualified for the manifestation of indignation, because the way these facts appear, they offend the entire content of knowledge I've acquired over years of study and fieldwork that I conducted. However, to become indignant with such overwhelming and undeniable facts, certainly shall not alter or affect the structures of historically apathetic societies, ommissive and indifferent to events of this nature within the Fila Brasileiro breed.*

*I propose here, in front of a whole community of FB breeders, all organizations and individuals, unhappy with the continuation of the existing heterogeneity within the breed until the present and following the introduction of other breeds (as stated by the former President of the CBKC Eugênio Henrique Pereira de Lucena); the beginning of a cycle of discussions on what to do / what actions to take in face of this framework.*

*In my view, it is impossible to live with this situation any longer. Certainly, we who practice the breeding of what may be termed the Original Fila Brasileiro, which we all know well what is. And on the opposite side, a modern fila, still under construction and from what I understand, in search of a standard; perhaps an identity, by part of a group of breeders - a minority that insists on error! We now have a strong community of breeders - preservationists who struggle for the Fila to remain unchanged in its most basic characteristics by preserving its original utility both in mental qualities and in instinctive capacity as well as in physical specifications. I take the liberty of calling the leaders of the clubs that work with the preservation of this original type, to urgently volunteer your areas of operation and call on all your members and breeders with the aim of opening extensive discussions in search of a solution to this situation.*

*What I propose is more than a reaction, it is the delivery of a document prepared by a whole community of preservationists of the Fila Brasileiro addressed to the governing bodies of dog breeding world, with a proposed solution. I think any proposal to resolve this issue that warrants any legitimacy, has an obligation to start from breeders and that a significant portion of these breeders represent the desire of a majority.*

*I will make myself available to mediate discussions, seminars and forums in search of drafting a document that can be forwarded to the relevant bodies as a claim made by a preservationist class.*

*I am sending this manifesto (at the same time as challenging breeders) to all addresses available to me, requesting that all admirers of the Original Fila Brasileiro post this on their sites and send it their friends.*

*I hope the specialized clubs committed to the cause of preserving this dog breed also may position themselves.*

*In order show an example about what I mean when I talk about the diversity of the Original Standard, [a sequence of photos and comments is attached](#) and which can be compared to the Filas still faithful to the traditional Standard of origin.*

*Governador Valadares,  
January 2010. [printed in English in June 2011]  
Antonio Carlos Linhares Borges*