

f ROOTS

Local Music From Out There

terry hall & mushtaq

françoise guimbert

manu dibango

sandra luna

liu fang

victor gama

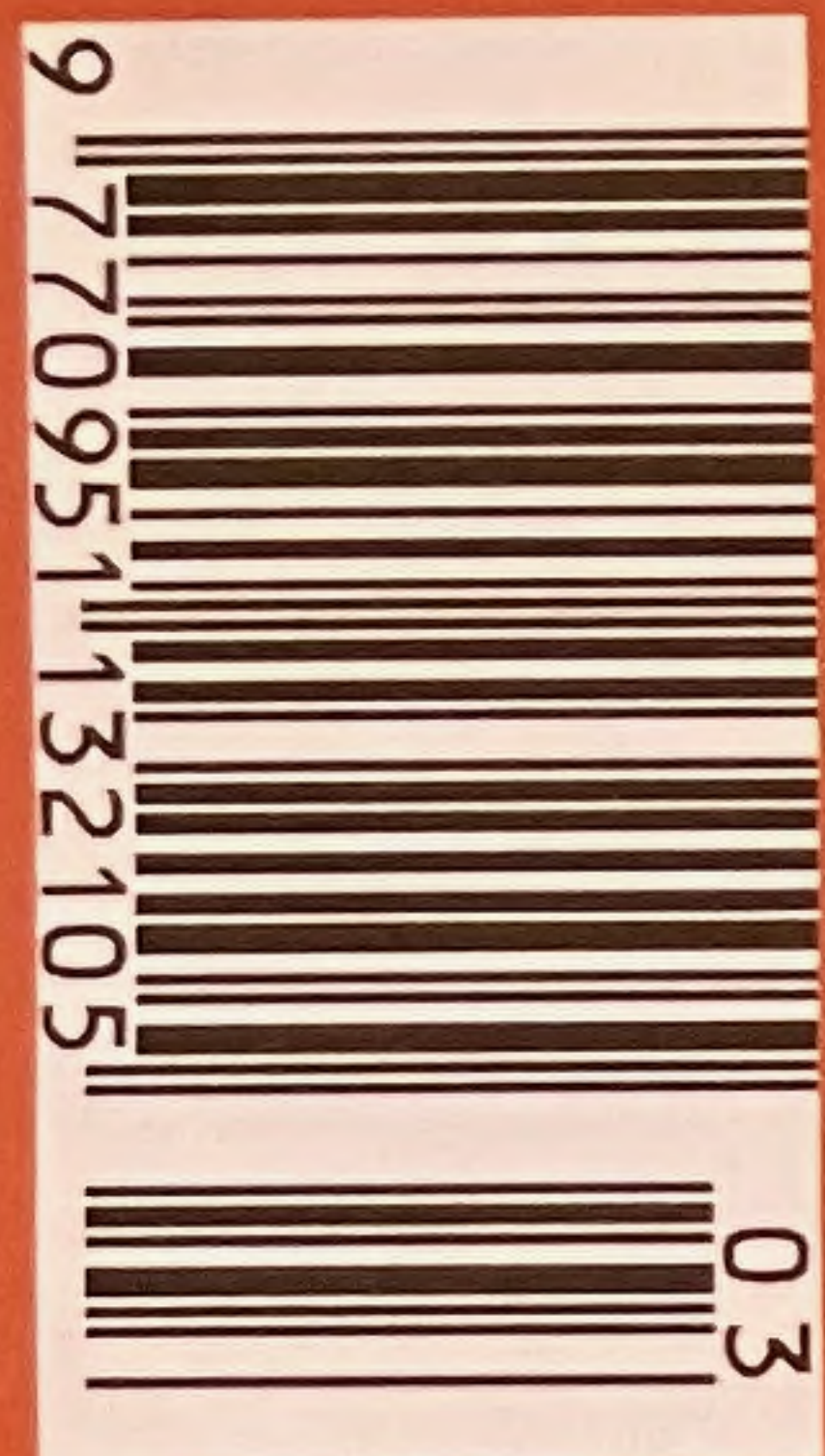
cold mountain

martyn bennett

awards winners

jimmoray

trad. arranged, but not as we know it



AND THE REST!

yes, there's more!

👉 **Baba Zula Psychebelly Dance Music**

(Double Moon dm0019) Blending Turkish traditional percussion, strings and voices with dub, dance and a dash of rumbling surf guitar, this project (produced by veteran reggae man Mad Professor) works surprisingly well. The sound of contemporary Istanbul and then some.

👉 **David Yengibarjan & Frank London Pandoukht** (Budapest Music Centre BMC CD 087) Hungarian accordionist meets Klezmatzics trumpeter. An arresting mix of tango, jazz and Eastern European folk.

👉 **Yela Ma Kalou** (RFO Musique REF DMC004R) The "queen of maloya swing" it says here. Which means reducing Reunion's funky roots music to a tinkly jazz/ Antilles/ Brazilian lounge travesty. And presumably the PR reference to "heartbreaking vocals" refers to the way she sings so seriously off-key that even Vogon poetry would be preferable.

👉 **Batanai Marimba Matumba Matumba** (InterArts Koni CD003) Best yet from marimba-heavy, UK-based Southern African nine-piece. Good songs, a full sound and some wild ensemble playing.

👉 **Various Blowing The Blues: A History Of Blues Harmonica 1926-2002** (Indigo IGOTCD 2536) The vaults have been plundered to present this patchy overview. Some excellent choices of early masters give way to some average later works. There's 71 tracks crammed on to three CDs and Neil Slaven's notes are so concise they make *And The Rest* reviews look like Charles Dickens!

👉 **Naze & The Botans Gule-Gule** (Stran Music CD071) Danish-based Kurdish singer with a fine voice, here in the company of both Kurdish and Scandinavian musicians. Some inspired moments, but not all of the material cuts the mustard and the Scandi-jazzers involved are a little too fond of overcooked, overlong solos.

👉 **Mike Whellans Almost 42nd Street** (Temple COMD 2092) Scottish one-man blues band stomps way through 14 lively tracks – even the blues are infused with an upbeat spirit. Woody Guthrie and Keb Mo' get mixed in with Tampa Red, Willie McTell, Slim Harpo, and a few from Mike himself. Nothing subtle, but a listenable set that should sell well at gigs.

👉 **Hypnotics Bagua** (Barbarity 024) Ethno-techno from Prague would you believe? Heavy on the Asian influences and pretty good in parts, although let down by some stilted English language raps and vocals.

👉 **Moksha The In-Between Us** (Moksha Productions no cat. no.) Folk meets reggae from Brighton-based bunch. Not the most original brew, but there's fiery musicianship and heavy basslines and it's pretty good in a shake-your-multicoloured-dreadlocks, kind of way. markcarroll@tiscali.co.uk

👉 **Meridian Prime** (Harbourtown HARCD 043) Chris Walshaw (of Stocai) conjures up interesting melody lines on pipes, whistles and flute, Richard Jones supplies driving accordion and piano, and Anna Tabbush fills in with fiddle, flute and the occasional vocal. Playing largely original Euro dance material, they're almost but not completely unlike a ceilidh band, oddly compelling, and definitely provoke the feet into involuntary motion.

👉 **Maria de Barros Nha Mundo** (Narada World 70876 18056-2-8) Bland offering from this unremittingly bland US label. Mornas, coladeiras and (surprise!) even a Cuban bolero from this young Cape Verdean singer who comes across like Gloria Estefan on prozac. Even the version of Luis Bonfá's *Manha de Carnaval* and the large lush acoustic arrangements only serve to remind us that we've heard it all before. Only better.

👉 **Kálmán Magyar Exposed** (Hungaria Records HRCD 003) Tunes from across the Balkans from US-born Magyar, who plays all the instruments of his Hungarian band himself, multi-tracking with one mic in his NJ basement. He's a skilful, experienced player, particularly on violin, and he makes a convincing combo though, as usual with such projects, it sometimes lacks the interacting zizz of a fully-staffed band. kalmanmagyar@yahoo.com

👉 **Ellis Hooks Up Your Mind** (Evidence ECD 26129-2) US bluesman Hooks possesses a real-deal gruff soul voice. Pity he's chosen to surround it with such workaday blues-rock.

👉 **Les Primitifs du Futur Cocktail d'Amour** (Paris Jazz Corner PJC 222009) Tracks 1-6 feature the bright and breezy music of Les Primitifs, mixing jazz and blues with a whiff of Gallic romance. On tracks 7-16, guitarists Didier Roussin and Dominique Cravic and harmonica blower Oliver Blavet play more straight ahead blues. A fine cocktail indeed.

👉 **Raduza ...Pri Mne Stuj** (Indies MAM 199-2) Urban chanson with clear traditional song roots, from striking and increasingly fêted young Czech songwriter. She's powerful live, accompanying herself on small piano accordion and guitar, and on her second CD she keeps it that simple and direct, with a touch of bass just on a couple of tracks. www.indiesrec.cz

👉 **Leah Callaghan Even Sleepers** (Baraca BA00013) Publicity makes much of her world music influences, but just another jerky US singer/songwriter with the odd accordion, Brazilian tint and arty pretence. Luckily it's really short. Value for money I'd say.

👉 **Meri Tiitola Meri Tiitola** (Hec Rec HRCD 114). Vocal explorations, with glimpses of their Finnish, Indian and other traditional roots, from promising Me Naiset member Tiitola with cello, wind instruments, harp etc. Individually some tracks communicate, but a solid album of them comes across as artsy patience-trying. meritiitola@yahoo.com

👉 **Various Global Pressure** (Nation NRCD 2013) A collection of rare and exclusive remixes from the reliably uncompromising global dance pioneers, Nation. Fun Da Mental, Transglobal and ADF amongst those being remixed, Pressure Drop, Mr Scruff and Badmarsh amongst those doing the remixing. Not recommended as the soundtrack to a quiet night in.

👉 **Rämpsäkät Rämpsäkät** (Mipu MIPUCD 22) Group of six teenage girls from Karelia playing 5, 15 and 39-string kanteles and accordion, with seven kantele tunes and three songs, arranged and in some cases written by their teacher, ex-Värttinä Sari Kaasinen. The delicate, ringing arrangements for ensemble kanteles are attractive, the singing a tad pitch-unsteady as yet. www.mipumusic.com

👉 **Terry Robb When I Play My Blues Guitar** (Burnside 0045) When Terry Robb plays his guitar he is quite formidable. His tone and modulation is impeccable and his guitar sound quite superb. His singing is OK, but doesn't convince to the same degree as his instrumental ability, but at least he will impress the guitar buffs.

👉 **Urban Trad Sanomi** (Universal Belgium 9865427) Yves Barbioux's compositions pillaging *Riverdance*, Hedningarna, La Bottine et al gather in a programmed Pan-Euro swamp, and the title track, sung by an Ialma member in an invented language, comes second at Eurovision. Calculating, yes, but infinitely preferable to the UK's sad "nil points" opus.



Daúde

Photo: Jon Lusk

👉 **Daúde Nequinho Te Amo** (Realworld CDRW 113) MPB diva makes her UK debut with Soul II Soul veteran Will Mowat as producer, and a bunch of classic tunes revisited. It's frothy, funky and languorously sensual pop, with samba, drum 'n' bass and various other electronic touches. Though it hasn't fully captured her charmingly effervescent stage persona, it's a slick and enjoyable introduction with a warm upbeat feel.

👉 **The Golden Gate Quartet ...The Good Book** (Fremeaux & Associés FA 465) This 2003 recording finds the current line-up still sounding amazingly like the original group. The repertoire is replicated from Louis Armstrong's 1958 album *The Good Book*, but the sound is pure, classic Golden Gate Quartet. Marvellous!

👉 **Agujetas El Rey del Canto Gitano** (Hiero/Boa 30002001) Agujetas, a formidable flamenco singer, evocatively backed by guitarist Curro de Jerez, performs a baker's dozen of bulerías, fandangos and *seguiriyas*. This barebones live recording was logged over several nights in a tavern in Jerez de la Frontera, in the sort of sherry-soak atmosphere that has long nourished this improvised vocal form.

👉 **Q Bee Beecoming** (Snakestone SBQ 03202 CD) Polish British blues scene adoptees Jake & Kate Zaitz made a splash with their Queen Bee & Snake's Blues Quartet CD. This excellent follow-up contains 11 edgy, groove-infested slices of contemporary blues funk. Sharp writing and focused playing make this very worthy of attention. www.qbee.org

👉 **Various The Best That Is Irish** (Celtic Connections CCCD 650) This clumsily-titled, utterly dreadful double CD dredges the deepest barrel, rounding up the usual suspects in an awful collection of the over-compiled and the terminally hackneyed (with the shining exceptions of Altan and Horslips). However, Colin Irwin will enjoy *The Fields Of Athenry* (yet again).

👉 **Robin Laing The Water Of Life** (Green-trax CDTRAX 246) Second album of songs about all aspects of Scotch whisky, to complement a recent book of songs and poems. Most here are 'trad arr.', and largely unfamiliar; sung amiably enough with a decent bunch of musicians and arrangements. Although themed albums don't always work, some songs here may well not be unfamiliar for much longer.

👉 **Various The Roots Of Lonnie Donegan** (Catfish KATCD 219) 25 original artist tracks that influenced the British godfather of skiffle Mr Lonnie Donegan. With the likes of Leroy Carr, Carter Family and, of course, Leadbelly, this mix of blues, country, folk and gospel makes for a diverse and entertaining CD, even though much of the material is overfamiliar.

👉 **Drum Drum Drum Drum** (no label/ cat. no.) Project mixing up music from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Australia – log drums a go-go – with hip hop, R&B and rock. Getting there, but not yet in the same class as NZ's Wai and Te Vaka. www.drumdrum.com.au