

musique d'un autre monde. **astrakan project.**



Simone Alves (chant) & Yann Gourvil (cordes, prog & loops) s'inspirent d'anciens textes de la tradition bretonne pour créer une ambiance sombre et parfois mélancolique à laquelle se mêlent des instruments turcs (oud et baglama) souvenir de leur long séjour à Istanbul et dans les Balkans.

3 albums (2012, 2014, 2018) distillent cet univers :

Keltia (janvier 2015 n°33),

« Attendez-vous donc à être bousculés par la voix profonde de Simone et l'oud entêtant de Yann. »

MusicWaves media (16.01.15),

« Le talent des deux protagonistes tant dans l'utilisation des instruments qu'au niveau de la performance vocale met en place un univers fascinant, superbement rendu par une production de qualité, présentant de nombreuses similitudes avec les terrains arpentés par Dead Can Dance. »

Albums tous trois remarquables outre-manche par quelques revues de référence comme fRoots (dont le duo sera la première formation originaire de Bretagne en couverture en Juin 2016) et Songlines,

fRoots (July 2013 n°361),

« *Gloriously full-throated, truly inspiring Breton singing and melodies from Simone Alves [...] roaring, intricate, fiery, imaginative accompaniments* »

Songlines (February 2014 n°106),

« *Murky myth and misery becomes surprisingly uplifting.* » (****)

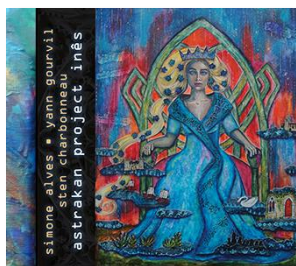
Leurs titres et albums se classent régulièrement en tête des ventes en catégorie world (Album B sur Bandcamp, octobre 2014), Japan Top 10 (Album B) ou dans le classement Transglobal World music chart (n°32, album Inês, février 2019). L'album concept Inês est également nominé parmi les 10 albums autoproduits de l'année 2018 par Ian Anderson (fRoots).

Depuis 2012, de nombreux concerts et festivals à travers l'Europe (GB, Portugal, Grèce, Belgique, Allemagne,...) et au-delà (Turquie, Ukraine, Liban) leur ont donné la possibilité d'exprimer une certaine vision globale de la musique sur scène, musique qui toujours est une quête des profondeurs de l'âme.

QUELQUES SCENES

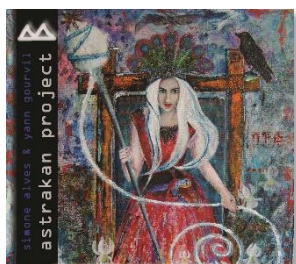
- 08/08/2019, Ruigoord festival, Amsterdam, **Pays Bas**
- 31/10/2018, Samhain night, La Porte Noire, Bruxelles, **Belgique**
- 13/04/2017, Wallters Musikcafé, Skanderborg, **Danemark**
- 09/03/2017, Sargfabrik, Vienne, **Autriche**
- 28/09/2016, Studio Paměť, Prague, **République Tchèque**
- 19/02/2016, Villa Eckert, Grevenbroich, **Allemagne**
- 10/11/2016, Festival Yaouank, Rennes, Bretagne, **France**
- 20/11/2016, Mission Bretonne, Paris, **France**
- 23/08/2015, Folk East Festival, Little Glenham, Suffolk, **GB**
- 19/06/2015, Vallée de Joux, **Suisse**
- 11-12-13-14/06/2015, Kiev, **Ukraine**
- 29/05/2015, Seyr-î Mesel, Beyoğlu, Istanbul, **Turquie**
- 19/05/2015, To Avgó, Salonique, **Grèce**
- 04/10/2014, Festival Breizh in the City, Londres, **GB**
- 21/07/14, FMM – Festival Músicas do Mundo, Sines, **Portugal**
- 9 au 14/06/14, The Road to Albion Tour, (Colchester, Norwich, Ipswich, London) **GB**
- 07/06/14, 't Ey, Belsele, **Belgique**
- 02/02/14, C.C. Renée Magritte, Lessines, **Belgique**
- 08/03/13 Gitar Cafe, Kadiköy, Istanbul, **Turquie**
- 29/12/12, Macrocosm Music Festival, Eilissos, Athènes, **Grèce**
- 26/04/12, Sin El Fil, CERMAA, Beirut, **Liban**
- 22/04/11 Nublu Jazz Festival, Beyoğlu, Istanbul, **Turquie**

DISCOGRAPHIE



Astrakan Project Inês, album concept studio
Karga 09, septembre 2018

Album Choice fRoots (hiver 2018-19)
N°32 Transglobal World Music Charts (février 2019)
**** Songlines



Astrakan Project B, album studio
Karga 044, octobre 2014

Album Choice fRoots
**** Songlines



Within the Circle, EP studio, édition numérique
Karga 021, Novembre 2013

Invité: Joao Cleto, cornemuse portugaise.



Astrakan Project, album studio
Karga 015, Septembre 2012

Album Choice fRoots
**** Songlines



Live in Lebanon, live EP, numérique,
Karga 012, Mai 2011

VIDEOS



- You Tube Channel : <http://youtube.com/astrakanproject>
- Official Video : <http://tinyurl.com/arstered>
- Live on France 3 TV : <http://tinyurl.com/astrakanFrance3>
- Live on France 3 TV : <http://tinyurl.com/astrakanFrance3b>

DIFFUSION RADIO & TV, PRESSE...

- **Presse** : fRoots n°396 couverture (magazine, juin 2016);
- **TV : Rod Trip**, France 3 Bretagne, interview (17/09/2017), **Bali Breizh**, sortie vidéo officielle, France 3 Bretagne (01/05/2016), **Bec'h De'i**, performance en direct, Brezhoweb (web tv en direct 21/04/2016), **Bali Breizh**, interview et performance, France 3 Bretagne (11/01/2015), **RTP**, interview (TV nationale, Portugal, 22/07/2014);
- **Interviews & live radio** : Ar bourmenadenn, interview, RBI (juillet 2018), La Playlist (RBI, août 2018), IO radio, concert et interview en direct (radio locale, **GB** 27/8/2015), 8 au 12 juin 2015, direct "tournée Ukraine" sur RBI (radio locale, Bretagne, **France**), Radio Libertaire, interview (radio locale, Paris, **France**, 01/03/2015) BBC Cambridgeshire, Sue Marchant night show (radio, **GB**, 05/10/14); Le Monde est un village, RTBF en direct (radio nationale, **Belgique**, 31/01/14); Terra Pura, interview (radio, 22/04/13, diffusée au **Portugal** et **Brésil**); Radio Liban, interview (**Liban**, 26/04/12); ...
- **Diffusion radios nationales** : Radio Canada, la Première RTBF, ...
- **Diffusion radios locales** : France (Radio Bleu Breizh Izel, RKB, Radio Bro Gwened, Arvorig FM) Grande Bretagne, New Sounds (radio WNYC, US), Israel, Liban, Espagne, Portugal, Belgique, Australie, Italie...

CONTACT



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<http://astrakanproject.com>

CHAINE YOUTUBE

<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7CBT9SY-2W7DWEugSRWUlw>

Plus de 150 vidéos incluant des collaborations, des expériences artistiques, des vlogs, et bien sur des lives, des interviews, etc.

fROOTS magazine

(<http://www.frootsmag.com>)

n° 396 (June 2016 issue), fRoots cover



Transglobal World Music Chart

(<http://www.transglobalwmc.com/category/charts/monthly-charts/>)

Février 2019 album Inês

Transglobal World Music Chart

FEBRUARY 2019



#1 Bassekou Kouyate & Ngoni Ba – *Miri* – Outhere

2. Vardan Hovannisian & Emre Gültekin – *Karin* – Muziekpublique
3. Dhafer Youssef – *Sounds of Mirrors* – Antepima
4. Urna Chahar-Tugchi featuring Kroke – *Ser* – Urna Chahar-Tugchi / UCT
5. Le Trio Joubran – *The Long March* – Cooking Vinyl
6. Salif Keita – *Un Autre Blanc* – Naïve
7. Ukandanz – *Yeketale* – Buda Musique
8. Belonoga – *Through the Eyes of the Earth* – NarRator Records
9. Moonlight Benjamin – *Siltane* – Ma Case
10. Gaye Su Akyol – *İstikrarlı Hayal Hakikattir* – Glitterbeat
11. Debashish Bhattacharya, Hubert Zemler & Wojtek Traczyk – *Joy!Guru* – Unzipped Fly
12. Afro Celt Sound System – *Flight* – ECC
13. Tartit – *Amankor / The Exile* – Riverboat / World Music Network
14. Ali Hassan Kuban – *From Nubia to Cairo* – Piranha
15. Shooglenifty & Dhun Dhora – *Written in Water* – Shoogle
16. Rodopi Ensemble – *Thraki: Thrace, the Paths of Dionysus* – ARC Music
17. Janusz Prusinowski Kompania – *Po Śladach / In the Footsteps* – Sluchaj Uchem / Buda Musique
18. Kelly Thoma – *Ama Kopasoun oi Kairoi (As the Winds Die Down)* – Kelly Thoma
19. Alfredo Rodríguez & Pedrito Martínez – *Duologue* – Mack Avenue
20. Oratnitza – *Alter Ethno* – Fusion Embassy
21. Damily – *Valimbilo* – Les Disques Bongo Joe
22. Manou Gallo – *Afro Groove Queen* – Contre-Jour
23. Moulay Ahmed El Hassani – *Atlas Electric* – Hive Mind
24. SANS – *Kulku* – Cloud Valley
25. Kitka – *Evening Star* – Diaphonica
26. V.A. – *Nostalgique Porto Rico: Plenas, guarachas, boléros et chansons jíbaras, 1940–1960* – Buda Musique
27. Abdesselam Damoussi and Nour Eddine – *Jedba: Spiritual Music from Morocco* – ARC Music
28. Tautumeitas – *Tautumeitas* – CPL-Music
29. Idan Raichel – *And if You Will Come to Me* – Cumbancha
30. V.A. – *Nostalgique Kongo: Rumbas Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo & Douala 1950-1960* – Buda Musique
31. Vigüela – *A Tiempo Real* – ARC Music
32. Astrakan Project – *Inês* – Astrakan Project
33. Lemma – *Lemma* – Buda Musique
34. Bokanté + Metropole Orkest – *What Heat* – Real World
35. At Adau – *Oba* – At Adau
36. Danças Ocultas – *Dentro desse Mar* – Danças Ocultas
37. BandAdriatica – *Odissea* – Finisterre
38. Subhasis Bhattacharya – *Tablananda* – Riverboat / World Music Network
39. Amira Kheir – *Mystic Dance* – Sterns Musi
40. Mimmo Epifani – *Putiferio* – Finisterre

Founder members and administrators: Ángel Romero (US), Araceli Tzigane (ES), Juan Antonio Vázquez (ES)

Current members: Dore Stein (US), Roger Holdsworth (AU), Madan Rao (IN), Gil Medovoy (US), Chris Heim (US), Ciro De Rosa (IT), Scott Stevens (US), Hendrick T S Foh (MY), Cliff Furnald (US), Rob Weisberg (US), Toni Polo (FR/ES), Nicolás Falcoff (AR), Masakazu Kitanaka (JP), Jordi Demésenillà (ES), Rafael Mieses (DO/US), Luís Rei (PT), Jean Trouillet (DE), Evangeline Kim (US), Willi Klopptek (LU/DE), Betto Arcos (MX/US), Thorsten Bednarz (DE), Alejandro López (ES), Jon Kertzer (US), Ken Stowar (CA), Jiří Moravčík (CZ), Mu Qian (CN), Carlos Ferreira (PT), Anna Rzhdevina (RU), Gil Rouvio (IL), Bouna Ndiaye (SN), Kutay Derin Kugay (TR), Robert Gregor (SK), Ponxo Taífa Ángeles (MX), Yatrika Shah-Rais (IR/US), Armen Manukyan (AM), Rolf Beydemüller (DE), François Bensignor (FR), Cecilia Aguirre (AR/DE), Eleni Ziliaskopoulou (GR), Marija Vitas (RS), Jaiř Tchong (NL), Enrique Blanc (MX), Tiago Lucas Garcia (BR), Zekeriya S. Şen (TR), Benjamin Muñiz (PR), Daryana Antipova (RU), Mika Kauhanen (FI), Luisa Piñeros (CO), Toni Pennacchia (US), Husniddin Ato (UZ), Chen Hanzi (CN), Seth Jordan (AU), Tony Hillier (AU), Charlie Crooijmans (NL), Nigel Wood (IE),

www.transglobalwmc.com

Albums submissions: www.transglobalwmc.com/album-submissions/

Contact: info@transglobalwmc.com

It's a quartet, with Kivimäki on vocals and her trademark insistent chugging push-pull 5-row and toy accordion, Sväng's Eero Grundström on gutsy, glitchy electronics and vocals, and Reeta-Kaisa Iles, Kivimäki's Puhti duo colleague, and Tuomas Juntunen on vocals. It's not really Hedningarna-like – its vocals tend towards rappy-spoken with sung melodic phrases coasting over, and it has more electronic manipulation and cut-up editing – but it has kinship in its grainy, powerful non-rock energy, and there's plenty of space in that field that hasn't been colonised as much as it could be. The material is part traditional, part band-composed, with strong roots in the hypnotic, narrow-compass melodies of Karelian traditional music, imbuing them with modern power and lyrics of the post-electricity, industrial age.

The latest of their videos, a sort of spoof-Western treatment of the album's opening track *Hummani Hei*, shows just how committed, theatrical, witty and self-image-effacing the band's members, barely recognisable in dirt and bad dentistry (not their own), are prepared to be.

nordic-notes.de

Andrew Cronshaw

EMILYN STAM & FILIPPO GAMBETTA

Shorelines Borealis BCD252



Well, this is the best thing to trouble my optical disc drive in many a moon. Filippo Gambetta is a diatonic accordion player from Genoa, blessed with formidable technique, dynamic expressiveness, and a fertile musical imagination. The nearest musical reference point is his compatriot, sometime bandmate Riccardo Tesi, echoes of whose playing can be heard in the tarantella *Taggiasca*. His partner here is Emilyn Stam, an equally rule-bending player of dance music from Toronto, on fiddle and piano. Despite the occasional nature of their collaboration, the two have a superbly intuitive understanding. Like our own Leveret they establish a theme and then weave improvisations around it, and the results are fascinating, revealing more at each hearing – I listened to this twice through, back-to-back, one evening.

Tracks are mostly original compositions by either party, plus a smattering of traditional tunes and mentor Oliver Shroer's graceful title track. Dance forms including mazurka, bourrée and waltz are filtered through modern art music and jazz, with tricky time signatures, syncopations and unexpected twists in both melody and harmony around every street corner. If this sounds a bit clever-clever, don't worry – it's never impenetrably abstruse, and is actually pretty emotional at times. Moods change in a flash, from Gambetta's lyrical polka *Aneto* to the broken-rhythm attack of *Stam's On The Dock*, then directly to an exuberant pair of polkas. It's beautifully recorded, the diamond-bright precision of the inevitable Castagnari contrasting nicely with the more rounded tone of keyboard or strings. Final track *The Secret* is a gorgeously meandering musical conversation on which to close a terrific album. The quirky dancing animals depicted in the cover art are a delight as well.

Hear a track on this issue's fRoots 71 compilation.

emilystam.com filippogambetta.com

Brian Peters

ASTRAKAN PROJECT

Inês Astrakan Project



Astrakan Project – cover-featured in fRoots 396 – are singer Simone Alves and, on guitars, oud, violin, percussion, drums and programming, Yann Gourvil. They're Bretons, but as her surname suggests, Alves is of a Portuguese family. This album's music is in the Breton gwerz ballad-form, and sung in Breton, but it tells a famous Portuguese story – that of 14th-century Galician noblewoman Inês de Castro.

The love affair between Inês and Pedro, heir to the Portuguese throne and already married to Constance of Castile, was forbidden by his father, King Alfonso IV, and indeed was ended by her murder under his orders. Pedro tracked down and killed two of the murderers, and when he became King Pedro I he divulged that he'd secretly married Inês. Legend, true or not, has it that he then had her corpse exhumed and crowned as his queen. They're both buried in the monastery of Alcobaça.

The songs, all by Alves and Gourvil, don't attempt to tell the whole story, just nine scenes from it, using a mixture of evidence and imagination. Some are in the insistent, phrase-repeating form of traditional ballad dance-singing, in which instrumental phrases echo the vocal lines, while others use winding traditional-form melodies that suit the projection of descriptive narrative. Alves's strong voice swirls over meaty instrumentation, the acoustic instruments intensified by programming. You can hear the concluding track on this issue's fRoots 71 compilation.

The CD comes in the back of a substantial long-format paperback book of colourful illustrations by Alves, with song texts and scene descriptions in Breton, French and English.

astrakanproject.com

Andrew Cronshaw

Astrakan Project



Photo: © Judith Burrows

FARA

Times From Times Fall Fara Music FARA002



Fara are an all-women Orkney quartet of three fiddles and a piano – Jennifer Austin (piano, keyboard, fiddle, vocals), Kristan Harvey (fiddle, vocals), Jeana Leslie (fiddle, lead vocal) and Catriona Price (fiddle, vocals). The music in their second album

is entirely self-composed, with the songs drawing lyrics from the words of famous Orkney poets.

Fara combine graceful, elegant, acoustic Scottish traditional style with vivid elements of Americana country/blues, and they do it in a polished, seamless way that feels very Orkadian, reflecting the influence of their mentor Douglas Montgomery (of Saltfishforty/The Chair). *Maxwell's Light* is an absorbing and evocative composition by Jennifer Austin in which the piano gracefully intertwines with the accompanying fiddles with a classical poise and delicacy of touch. *Frances' Day* is an exquisitely beautiful slow air on fiddle, with gossamer-delicate, sensitive accompaniment from the keyboard and other fiddles; it was composed by Catriona Price for her sister's wedding day. *At The Ebb* is a lingeringly beautiful slow air composed by Jeana Leslie.

The thrilling tune set *The Depiction* has soaring fiddles, driving piano and a cinematic sweep and swagger that cries out for someone to use it in a film soundtrack. *Speir Thoo The West Wind* is an Orkadian dialect song with dramatic, rhythmic fiddle accompaniment and strong Americana flavours. The opening instrumental set *The Port Polka* – hear it on this issue's fRoots 71 compilation – has bright, invigorating variation in pace and tone, with engaging harmonies and bluesy Americana licks on both fiddle and piano. This album is a masterly balance of reflection and celebration.

faramusic.co.uk

Paul Matheson

Ar Men

(<http://www.armen.net>)

n° 206 (mai-juin 2015), chronique album B



ASTRAKAN PROJECT : CORDES ET VOIX

C'est une esthétique directement influencée par la Kreiz Breizh Akademi qui préside à ce projet international. Simone Alves et Yann Gourvil, élèves de la première promotion, poursuivent leur chemin créateur en suivant les bases enseignées par Erik Marchand. La voix profonde de Simone Alves, dans un registre grave et légèrement granuleux, adopte ces fameuses gammes non tempérées qui procurent une couleur orientalisante au propos, couleur intensifiée par les cordes du oud de Yann Gourvil. Le plus intéressant dans le projet Astrakan réside sans doute dans l'électrification des instruments. On retrouve alors des ostinatos qui s'intègrent à

merveille dans la scansion de la voix, avec une tension qui va volontiers croissant. Le violon, joué également par Yann Gourvil, vient de temps à autre élargir le spectre sonore, un complément pertinent de la voix. Le seul bémol qu'on peut mettre à la clef de cette réalisation sera le choix des thèmes. Le répertoire populaire manquera-t-il à ce point de diversité pour qu'on doive se contenter de chansons précédemment interprétées par d'autres ? Dommage, car le discours d'*Astrakan Project* ne manque pas de sel. Le duo gagnerait beaucoup à rechercher plus soigneusement ses chansons.

M.T.

Simone Alves/Yann Gourvil. *Astrakan Project*, co-Kargo 044. <http://astrakanproject.bandcamp.com>



fRoots magazine Playlist Album Choices

(<http://www.frootsmag.com>) trimestriel anglophone

n° 423 (décember 2018), album Inês

5 fROOTS

PLAYLIST

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ALBUM CHOICES

Our favourite new albums on the **fROOTS** player this issue. Some are so hot off the press that they aren't even reviewed yet but you can listen to tracks on **fRoots Radio** at podwireless.com



THE FURROW COLLECTIVE
Fathoms
(Hudson)
www.thefurrowcollective.co.uk
Yer actual Britfolk supergroup excel.



BÂTON BLEU
Weird And Wonderful Tales
(DixieFrog)
www.facebook.com/batonbleu
Unclassifiable French originality.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Two Niles To Sing A Melody
(Ostinato)
www.ostinatorecords.com
Exemplary package of Sudanese gems.



ASTRAKAN PROJECT
Inês
(Astrakan Project)
www.astrakanproject.com
Breton music meets Portuguese legend.



EMILYN STAM & FILIPPO GAMBETTA
Shorelines
(Borealis)
www.borealisrecords.com
Italian accordion meets Canadian fiddle.



JEAN-PHILIPPE RYKIEL & LANSINÉ KOUYATÉ
Kangaba-Paris (Buda)
www.budamusique.com
Exquisite piano and balafon duets.



FARA
Times From Times Fall
(Fara Music)
www.faramusic.co.uk
Orkney's finest keep on cooking.



JAUNE TOUJOURS
Europeana
(Choux De Bruxelles)
www.choux.net
World's finest 'Belgian mestizo' live band.



JOHN SMITH
Hummingbird
(Commoner)
www.johnsmithjohnsmith.com
Gorgeous album of mostly traditionals.



THOM ASHWORTH
Head Canon
(Thom Ashworth)
www.thomashworth.com
Bass-toting champ of the NWOFBs.



HICKORY SIGNALS
Turn To Fray
(GF*M)
www.hickorysignals.com
Two-fifths of Bird In The Belly hit it true.



SUISTAMON SÄHKÖ
Etkot Pectopah Ja Etnoteknoa
(Kihtinjärvi/ Nordic Notes)
www.nordic-notes.de
Finnish folk music goes wiggily forwards.

For our live choices look for the



symbol in the following News pages.

SIMONE ALVES & YANN GOURVIL

Astrakan Project B Carga 044



Let's start with Reviewer's Confession Time. The reaction on looking at the album cover and quickly perusing the brief notes was, for some reason, "I am not going to enjoy this!" After listening to the first track the opinion was, "This music deserves very careful listening." After 40-odd minutes concentration, the album has somehow gained continuous play now for a number of days.

Neither Simone nor Yann are native Breton speakers but they have an intense grounding in Breton culture. They have lived away from Brittany for some years in Istanbul, absorbing a broad range of Middle Eastern instruments and musical styles which Yann has been able to adapt skilfully to

accompany Simone's voice. It is her voice that is the most arresting aspect of this entrancing album. Listening to her passionate engagement with the gwerz (laments) it is possible to hear and trace the line that goes something like Les Sœurs Goadec – Yann-Fañh Kemener – Erik Marchand – Simone Alves. She brings the correct amount of fervour to these very old pieces and the right amount of excitement when she sings *Kan Ha Diskan* with her vocal call being answered by an instrumental response.

Yann is the master of a range of string instruments and uses acoustic and electric guitar, saz, oud, and violin as well as darbuka and programming where the human and not the technology is firmly in control.

Another favourable mention for the excellent artwork and design by Simone. Anything negative to balance this entirely favourable review? Not much. Glad to have a magnifying glass on my desk to read the interesting notes and it would have been good to hear more of the cello of Kan Ha Diskan that makes a real contribution to the opening track – but that is about all.

They seem fiercely determined to avoid distribution by others so you will have to go to their website for sales and for links to may have downloads. You heard a track from its predecessor on *fRoots 45*.

astrakanproject.com

Vic Smith

Above the laments, rooted in 1 and crickets throw Young's golden-tr She both revels in sense sounds, but style which blurs lose yourself in th than the detail of themed songwriti

The album b songs: driving pol *Salmon* (Satie mal Swedish / Indian-1 *No 1*) balance You real-tinged, song: chop-driven *Gree* complete with ou twists and turns o

Fearless, inte www.kateyo

Sarah Coxson

NEGRO AC
El Saxofón Hum
FSR-CD3019



L
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Keltia Magazine

(<http://www.keltia-magazine.com/>)

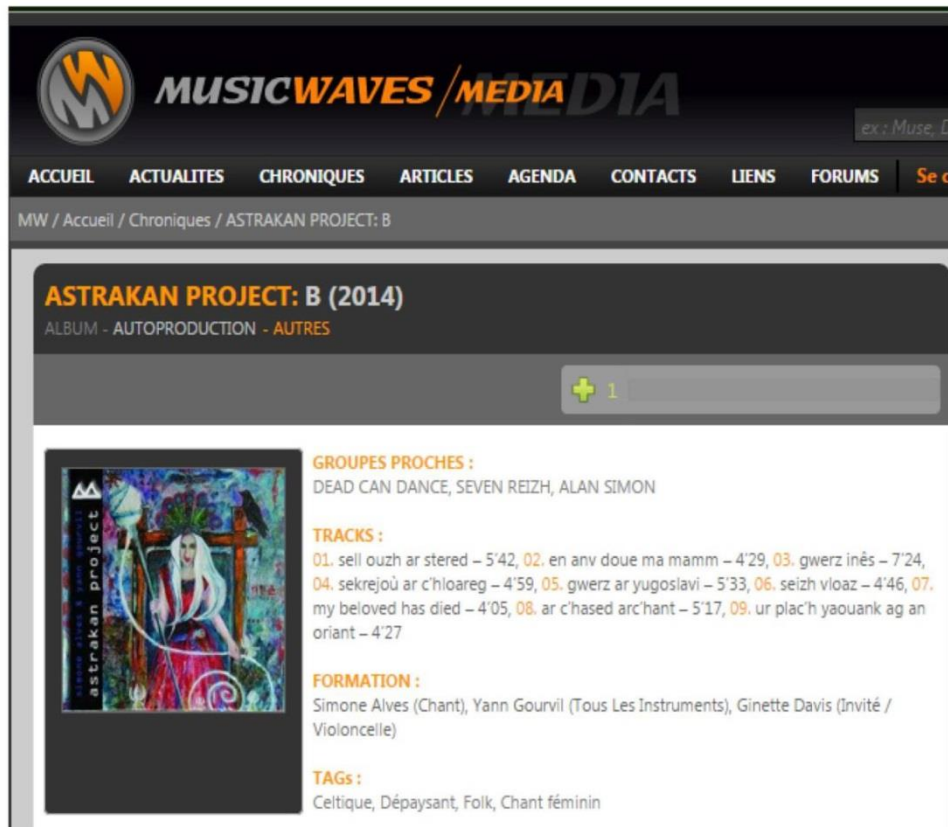
n° 33 (janvier-mars 2015), chronique album B



Music Waves

(<http://www.musicwaves.fr/>)

16/01/2015, chronique album B



The screenshot shows the MusicWaves/Media website interface. At the top is the logo and navigation menu with links: ACCUEIL, ACTUALITES, CHRONIQUES, ARTICLES, AGENDA, CONTACTS, LIENS, FORUMS, and Se c. Below the menu is a breadcrumb trail: MW / Accueil / Chroniques / ASTRAKAN PROJECT: B. The main content area features the album title 'ASTRAKAN PROJECT: B (2014)' in orange, followed by 'ALBUM - AUTOPRODUCTION - AUTRES'. A green plus icon and the number '1' are visible. To the left is the album cover art, which depicts a woman in traditional Breton dress. To the right of the cover, the text 'GROUPES PROCHES : DEAD CAN DANCE, SEVEN REIZH, ALAN SIMON' is displayed. Below this, the 'TRACKS :' section lists nine tracks with their durations: 01. sell ouzh ar stered – 5'42, 02. en anv doue ma mamm – 4'29, 03. gwerz inès – 7'24, 04. sekrejoù ar c'hloareg – 4'59, 05. gwerz ar yugoslavi – 5'33, 06. seizh vloaz – 4'46, 07. my beloved has died – 4'05, 08. ar c'hased arc'hant – 5'17, 09. ur plac'h yaouank ag an oriant – 4'27. The 'FORMATION :' section lists Simone Alves (Chant), Yann Gourvil (Tous Les Instruments), and Ginette Davis (Invité / Violoncelle). The 'TAGs :' section lists 'Celtique, Dépaysant, Folk, Chant féminin'.

Astrakan Project est le fruit de la collaboration entre le multi-instrumentiste Yann Gourvil, et la chanteuse Simone Alves. L'indice porté par le patronyme du premier est rapidement confirmé à la lecture des instruments mis en œuvre et aux premières notes chantées par la deuxième : l'univers ici déployé est porté par la tradition bretonne, qui sert de trame aux neuf plages proposées sur ce deuxième album sobrement intitulé B.

Celles-ci sont toutes issues d'une tradition plus ou moins ancienne, et au-delà du chant en breton, on retrouve une structure classique de ce type de morceaux, présentant de nombreuses répétitions alternées entre la voix et les instruments. Le duo ajoute également une forte coloration orientale à sa musique, influence probable de leur lieu de résidence (Istanbul). C'est ainsi que le Oud fait très souvent figure d'instrument principal, apportant ses sonorités typiques à une musique très tonale, au sein de laquelle on ne dénote que peu de changement de tonalité, seuls les passages instrumentaux entre les parties chantées permettant à Yann Gourvil de moduler son accompagnement en incorporant et mêlant au fur et à mesure instruments traditionnels et électriques pour le meilleur (guitare électrique saturée par exemple) ou le moins bon (batterie programmée, totalement affreuse notamment sur le titre En Anv Doue ma Mamm).

Music Waves

(<http://www.musicwaves.fr/>)

16/01/2015, chronique album B

Même sans en reprendre l'aspect technoïde, la démarche du duo peut ainsi se rapprocher de celle suivie en fin de siècle dernier par Denez Prigent, à savoir remettre au goût du jour une tradition ancienne, en modernisant son rendu tout en conservant son âme. Le talent des deux protagonistes tant dans l'utilisation des instruments qu'au niveau de la performance vocale met en place un univers fascinant, superbement rendu par une production de qualité, présentant de nombreuses similitudes avec les terrains arpentés par Dead Can Dance. Néanmoins, une certaine linéarité dans la structure des compositions, les sonorités et surtout les tonalités employées finit par installer une légère lassitude sur la durée.

Illustré par un superbe artwork de Simone Alves, B emmènera l'auditeur bien au-delà des frontières délimitant la région la plus à l'Ouest de notre beau pays, dans un voyage non seulement géographique mais également historique. Malgré un sentiment de répétition qui s'installe au fil de son écoute, la finesse des arrangements et la qualité d'interprétation des différents titres permettent cependant de passer un agréable moment tout du long de ces neuf plages piochées dans une riche histoire. Dépaysement garanti.

Le Trou au Loup

(<http://www.trou-au-loup.com/>)

27/02/2015, chronique de concert

Envolées sensibles et métissées, cultures mélangées, puisées au plus profond des aventures des migrations humaines au cours de l'histoire, contes lyriques, douceur harmonique et fusion des identités, vocalises improbables dans des langues ancestrales, rythmiques complexes et primitives à la fois, générosité et ouverture artistique.

Stéphane Delanoë

Le Canard Folk

(www.canardfolk.be/)

(May 2013 issue), album review

(www.pakerprod.com).



Simone Alves & Yann Gourvil : Astrakan Project (Karga 015)

Les Bretons Simone ALves (chant) et Yann Gourvil (guitare, oud, saz, violon, programmation) collaborent depuis une dizaine d'années (entre autres dans le Kreiz Breizh Akademi) et se sont posés à Istanbul, d'où ils sillonnent les Balkans. Astrakan est en Russie, mais strakañ en breton signifie frapper, comme les pieds des danseurs. La puissance évocatrice du chant breton s'allie à des sonorités exotiques dans un univers musical tissé magistralement par Yann Gourvil. Chaleur, plénitude, richesse, énergie, élan. La fusion semble parfaitement naturelle après un premier moment d'étonnement - c'est un signe indéniable de réussite ! (www.myspace.com/boogietownagency, www.astrakanproject.com).

fRoots magazine

(<http://www.frootsmag.com>)

n° 360 (june 2013 issue), album review

SIMONE ALVES & YANN GOURVIL
Astrakan Project Carga 015

Sometimes I get hoist by my own prejudices and preconceived ideas. So it was that I glanced at the back of this album, noted the legend "A colourful and delicate oriental shine over wild Celtic music", and the dread vision of Loreena Newage materialised. And so it festered unplayed in the 'oh f*** do I really have to listen to this?' pile on my desk for several weeks, until we were just about to go press with this issue.

Don't do that at home. Should a copy of this CD appear in your letterbox, hopefully because this review may have alerted you to it, seize it and put it in your player straight away. You will not be disappointed.

For 'Celtic', do not read 'wifty-wafty-synth-twee', but instead gloriously full-throated, truly inspiring Breton singing and melodies from Simone Alves. For 'a colourful and delicate oriental shine', read 'roaring, intricate, fiery, imaginative accompaniments' from multi-instrumentalist Yann Gourvil on oud, electric saz (or baglama as the Turks call it), violin and programmed percussion.

Indeed, for 'oriental', don't read 'Far East' as we Brits tend to use it, but 'from the Eastern reaches of the Mediterranean'. It's the

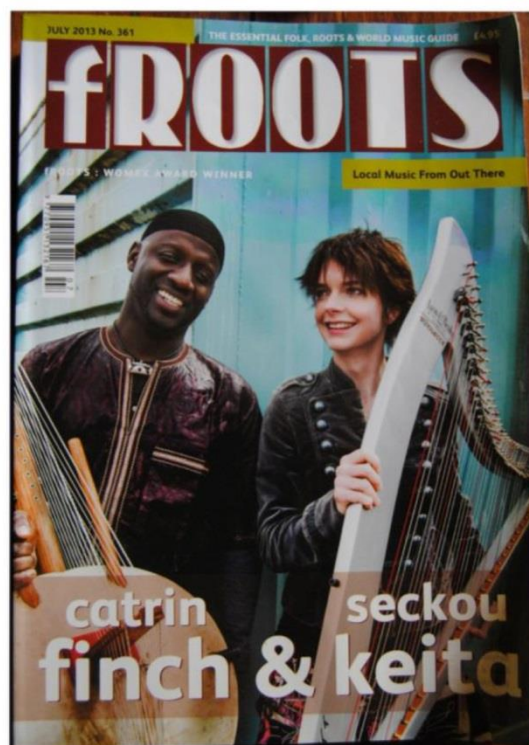


sort of production that wouldn't sound out of place on the better contemporary Turkish roots records – it turns out that they've lived and studied in Istanbul for the past few years – and it's obviously a close relative to what Kristi Stassinopoulou & Stathis Kalyviotis did with *Greekadelia*. In fact I'd christen it Breton-Turkadelia if I hadn't run out of credit in the 'name a genre a day' fund.

When I hit them up for a copy of the biog that this maltreated review copy had obviously got separated from, I found that they were involved in one of the sainted Erik Marchand's inspiring projects that included Ross Daly, Thierry 'Tit' Robin and Keyvan Chemirani. That makes complete sense, and they are justifiably spoken of in the same breath as those iconic names. And if that doesn't get you people who know about that sort of thing reaching for your credit cards, I don't know what will.

A truly fabulous, spirit-raising album.
astrakanproject.com

Ian Anderson



Songlines magazine

(<http://www.songlines.co.uk>)

n° 93 (July 2013 issue), p78, album review

REVIEWS

Fusion

Simone Alves & Yann Gourvil
Astrakan Project
Karga Records (43 mins)
★★★★
Tales of dark romance and doomed love



This album has nothing, as far as one can tell, to do with the town on the Caspian Sea or hats. The core of this album is enjoyably gloomy traditional Breton singing, from the pure voice of Simone Alves with her partner Yann Gourvil in charge of instruments and programming. The duo's songs are peppered with Celtic myth and legend, but mainly are about doomed love and death. A sample lyric, translated from the Breton, as a lover decides to kill himself after his beloved dies: *'We'll lie in the same grave since we haven't been in the same bed, we'll be married in front of God since we haven't been by the priest.'* What is unusual, and probably unique is the 'Oriental' colours added to the songs (the duo lived in Istanbul for a while) with Gourvil playing *oud* and *daf* as well as more usual folk instruments.

Standout tracks include '1932', which is an effective evocation of the misery of a failed harvest when there's no bread, while 'Mouezhiou' sounds a little Bulgarian and is an atmospheric song about a woman who bitterly regrets marrying a drunkard. The electronics used on songs like 'Kreñv' 'Veld ar Garantez' are generally subtly interwoven although at times the drum machine stands out, and not in a good way. By the end of this compelling, if at times slightly claustrophobic, record there is a slight sense that some other players would have added a more interesting and rich sonic palette. Still, there are some superb songs rendered in an original way, which suggests considerable potential. The cover artwork is intriguing, too.

🔊 **TRACK TO TRY: 1932**

Peter Culshaw

Radios & TV





01/03/2015
Radio Libertaire Paris
Folk à Lier



18/03/2014
Arvorio FM
E Brezhoneg!



28/03/2015
Block-Out Radio



17/10/2014
I/O Ipswich Radio