



Ronnie Lane & Slim Chance

voice blends excellently with the depth of the male voices, and she alternates in duets or sings lead in several tracks, including a passionate performance, accompanied by guests Antxon Sarasua's piano and Kepa Junkera's *trikitixa*, of her own Uruguayan milonga *Un Coracón Y Un Latido*. She also takes the first of a trio of work songs from Uruguay, Murcia and Euskadi that are sung over a pounding, metal-clattering industrial 3/4.

There's a joyful Mexican *zapateado* swing to Luna's *Chiquita Dame Café* with Lasuen's fiddle in mariachi style, and Mexican *jarocho* and south-west Iberian *aguinaldos* meet in Luna's *La Llorona*. Lasuen's *alboka* shrills, in splendid massed multi-track, in a well-known Basque dance tune flowing around his song tribute to famous 20th-century *alboka* player León Bilbao.

Much of the album's rhythmic drive, and I suspect quite a lot of its organising impulse, comes largely from the guitars and bouzouki of executive producer and the only non-vocalist here, Basque Josean Martin.

The group first met in Évora in Portugal's Alentejo, during the Ibero-American expo EXIB Música, which is an inspiring and, as this album shows, productive gathering of musicians from the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking sides of the Atlantic, so the strong rendition of the iconic Alentejo traditional song *Gota De Água*, joined by Galician Xosé Lois Romero and Portugal's João Afonso, is an appropriate closer.

agorila.com

Andrew Cronshaw

## RONNIE LANE

**Just For A Moment** Universal UMC 675 593-9

"Well I've no use for riches, and I've no use for power. And I've no use for a broken heart, I'll let this world go by..."

A rock star adored by the folkies, the late Ronnie Lane was Spencer The Rover incarnate. He's the boy who ran away from the 1970s rock'n'roll circus to set up home with his family down on the farm – where with a versatile group of like-minded musicians he created some of the most enduring and uplifting folk-rock-country-soul music of the era.

The first four discs of this sumptuous six-CD box set cover Ronnie's four solo albums – *Anytime For Anymore* (1974), *Ronnie Lane's Slim Chance* (1975), *One For the Road* (1976) and *See Me* (1979) with bonus tracks including cuts from *Mahoney's Last Stand* (with Ron

Wood) and *Rough Mix* (with Pete Townshend). The fifth disc features some thrilling live performances while the sixth focuses on rare recordings from Ronnie's final years in the U.S. Hearing that voice, diminished but undimmed by multiple sclerosis, sing *Ooh La, La's* familiar chorus, "I wish that I knew what I know now, when I was stronger..." is almost unbearably poignant.

Lovingly compiled and sequenced by Ronnie's long-time Slim Chance comrade Charlie Hart (*FR372*) the discs come in a large-format hardback book filled with evocative photographs and essays by Paolo Hewitt, Kris Needs and Kent Benjamin, with a foreword by Pete Townshend. An accompanying illustrated lyrics booklet and a facsimile poster for *The Passing Show* complete this beautifully conceived and realised artefact. The definitive collection of the little fella with the impish grin, taken far too soon, but never equalled nor forgotten.

slim-chance.co.uk

Steve Hunt

## HANNU KELLA & TIMO ALAKOTILA

**Mingled Years** Keino KPXC001

Hannu Kella of Tsuumi Sound System, and Timo Alakotila of JPP and much else and a big influence in today's folk-evolved Finnish music (I find I've over 40 albums involving him), unite in some of their past compositions and two co-writes.

They expand their accordion and piano or harmonium duo with the fiddles of Esko Järvelä and Raisa Päivinen, a string quartet involving Esko's Frigg comrades Alina Järvelä and Tommi Asplund, oboe, clarinet, harp, double bass, guitar, glockenspiel and female voices.

Alakotila's compositional style is characterised by winding, complex, restlessly chording note-filled melodies with lots of shifting internal syncopation, moving sometimes, as here in the slow, surging *Lampaan Polska*, to a misty drifting darkness.

Kella's matches that in some ways, with an added skittering drive that typifies the music of Tsuumi Sound System, which sprang from that band's role in providing music for dance group Tsuumi, for whom Alakotila's *Olavin Polska* was originally written. Their shared appreciation of tango emerges in Kella's opener *Lobo De Oro* and the tango/waltz combination *Minglewaltz*. The closer, his *Sorrow March*, written for his

grandmother's funeral, is stately, shapely and evocative in the grand tradition of western Finnish funeral marches.

hannukella.com

Andrew Cronshaw

## KAYHAN KALHOR, REMBRANDT FRERICHS, TONY OVERWATER, VINSENT PLANJER

**It's Still Autumn** Kepera Records Kepera 74715

In 1957, the American composer, musician and writer Gunther Schuller dropped a new coinage into a lecture at Brandeis University. Third Stream was "a new genre of music located about halfway between jazz and classical music." In its fusing of jazz, European classical and folk/world music styles, Miles Davis' *Sketches Of Spain* (1960) became its perfect exemplar. He and arranger Gil Evans created a new form.

*It's Still Autumn* is, no higher praise, the perfect Third Stream exemplar for our times in fusing jazz with Iranian (non-western) art music and Armenian (and possibly other) folk forms. It is a mind-meld of the Iranian *kamanche* (spike fiddle) maestro Kayhan Kalhor and the Dutch jazz band, Rembrandt Frerichs Trio. The latter comprises their leader on fortepiano and harmonium, Tony Overwater on violone (here, bass viol) and double-bass, and Vinsent Planjer on 'whisper kit' (drums). The musical outcomes are far more than the sum of the parts on paper.

The pieces break down into the five-part *Dawn* and the four-part *Dusk*. The key to the music's uncanniness lies in sonorities. Simon Broughton's notes explain that Kalhor's *kamanche* has an extra low string so it can go darker. The fortepiano's sound is roughly between piano and harpsichord and can go to *tar* (flute) and *santur* (hammer dulcimer) places. The bass viol can mimic Arabic lute. That team of Kayhan Kalhor and the Rembrandt Frerichs Trio who went into Fattoria Music, a residential music production facility in a converted farm in Osnabrück, in November 2015, have created nothing less than a complete and utter unexpected masterpiece

challengerecords.com

Ken Hunt

## LIZABETT RUSSO

**Something-in-Movement** Lizabett Russo

The first thing you notice is the voice. Merciful and otherworldly, it croons, cries and trills through a number of passionate, poetically rich songs. Russo's third album is a deeply personal exploration of her experiences in her native Romania and her new home in Britain, refracted through allusive lyrics and elemental, almost folkloric themes. *Ocean Frequency's* gentle opening thrum is rent by jagged bursts of self-questioning and birdlike trills, breaths and vocables. *Penumbra* is a medieval story told with brooding, intense strings, while Russo's voice takes on brass and woodwind qualities on *Deep Dark Moon*.

Russo's classical guitar is sumptuously buoyed by the band's strings, percussion, electric guitar, loops and effects. Finally, after nine of her own songs, Russo switches to the *charrango* (a small Andean instrument of the lute family) for *Hai, Dunarea Mea* (Danube Song), a traditional Romanian song which her grandfather used to sing while working in the fields. Like nothing else you'll hear this year.

lizabettrosso.com

Clare Button