

Dr. Rhythm Newsletter

This continues in the same pell-mell mode of breakneck tempos and wild solos on the brink as our other Balkan favourites, Boban Markovic, Fanfare Ciocarlia & Nat Veliov. The difference is in broader instrumentation and a range of melodies drawn from Afghanistan, Greece, Romania, Egypt, Lebanon, and beyond. Founded in 1999 in Hungary, Besh o Drom's music is Eastern European folk to dance to as well as contemplate. Their versatility and huge fund of inspirational sources gives this a really broad range which makes it a pleasure. A track called "Afghan" is pure jazz with the lead alto sax doubled by a tenor, and the pianist shadowed by a cimbalom which is one of those instruments that looks like the guts of a piano played with drumsticks. This is followed by a track of hard rock derivation called "Yell." Then what sounds like more predictable Romany gypsy music with some circus-like touches, goofy scat vocals and whistles. In short this is a very diverse set, undoubtedly great to see first hand. Their name means "Go your own way" and they have gone in several directions at once. The basic sound is Hungarian, particularly when the cimbalom is lead instrument, but then the ney and derbuka come in and we are lost in the kasbah.

Alastair Johnston 01.06.03