

"Kal" by Kal

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World music is a very risky genre. Here in the United States, anything that sounds too ethnic to be classified as "rock/pop" is relegated as "world music" in record stores nationwide. And in the case of European import **Kal**, it's a shame that their self-titled debut LP is bound to languish in world music obscurity. Kal is ambitious on their record Kal; they aspire to popularize Eastern European Gypsy rock without straining it of any of its culture. And they manage to pull it off with subtle aplomb. The Belgrade sextet are not unlike Loreena McKennitt in their crossover appeal and with burgeoning public interest and fascination in the new Gypsy rock phenomenon, perhaps Kal may find their own niche this side of the Atlantic.

Fresh fusions of woodwinds, percussion, strings and even a stray accordion keep this album from becoming the least bit tedious. From Duj Duj to Midnight Walk, American rock guitar sensibilities season a distinctly Eastern European sound. Though each track flows right into the next one, slick production values and crafty instrumentation give all of twelve tracks their own unique identities.

Kal may not be something you could expect to hear on popular radio, but it's the perfect score for a nice dinner party when everyone's itching to pop open the cabernet and talk politics and poetry.