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KAL Radio Romanista

[Review] Asphalt Tango 4047179204927
Submitted by Jill Turner on 9 February, 2009 - 23:49.



Jill Turner tunes in to Radio Romanista. Nearly three years after their self titled, debut album, KAL, the boys in black - are back. Louder, faster and tighter than before with a generous helping of punk rock. This is less oupa and more oi yoi yoi yoi.

Fourteen original tunes, sung in Romani, French and English. Opening with the very catchy, high kicking 'Krasanokalipsa', one for the lads to indulge those "dancing on hot coals whilst cheering your football team" type moves. The album starts as it means to go on, fast and hard a departure from their debut album and leaving Dvojka's light fiddling and Djelem Djelem's sweet moodiness well and truly in the slow lane.

Just as you thought this album maybe permanently veering off in a Polkaholix / Bordello direction, the boys bring it back with the Oriental styled 'Turkish Blues', with its rolling frames drums and slinky clarinet playing from Sina Acifovic. Then midway we have the intriguingly entitled Pour les Enfants et Personnes Sensible which would sit well in a punk tango set. A collaboration with Melingo anyone ? But no time to rest or contemplate between tracks, we're off again the next stop wild crazy fiddling from Vladan Petrovic on the track 'Romoza', picking up where Mozarella left off and giving Kal a sound that sets them apart from the pack.

Don't pick up this album expecting to be entertained by sweet gypsy music, like a tourist in a Belgrade restaurant. Instead embrace the energy that Dragan, the band leader, calls Rock n Roma and enjoy the live feel to the album a result of getting the backbone of your touring band into the studio.

Dragan, once told me in an interview that despite being persecuted all over the world, the Roma have never, ever, picked up weapons, he is proud and passionate when he speaks of his roots, however he says in the sleeve notes, "we are no longer going to stay silent and entertain you. My generation is ready!

If 'I'm a Gypsy' is the manifesto, 'Radio Romanista' the nationalist dream then KAL is the political party. Get ready to pogo and let the hustings begin....

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