



DONA DUMITRU SIMINCĂ
Sounds From A Bygone Age,
Vol. 3

Asphalt Tango

Like the late Qawwali master Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's, the voice of deceased Romanian Gypsy Doria Dumitru Simincă is so otherworldly that it defies our perceptions of what nature had in mind for human vocal chords. A pure and pliable falsetto (more Little Jimmy Scott than Frankie Valli), Simincă possessed a truly rare instrument, over which he wielded complete control. Unlike Khan's reverential, hypnotic Qawwali excursions, though, lautari Simincă's operatic Bucharest blues creates a palpable distance between man and work, as it exudes a forlorn sadness, even while his words offer hope and solace. It's a sound that both astounds in its ethereality and engages with its power—like a virtuoso's violin (which he played), Simincă's throat emanates a soaring emotionalism and an almost unheard-of musicality. These recordings date from the early '60s, but you'd never know it—there's a timelessness to them that belongs to the ages.

—JEFF TAMARKIN

