

Dona Dumitru Siminicã

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Sounds From A Bygone Age, Vol. 3
(Asphalt Tango)

The world of beautifully androgynous singing voices—Antony and the Johnsons, Los Zafiro's Ignacio Elejaide—is a small one. But thanks to German label Asphalt Tango, it can add one more member: Romanian Gypsy singer Dona Dumitru Siminicã. Captured on a rare recording in the early '60s in Bucharest, Siminicã was revered in the local circuit of *muzica lăutărească*, or quiet suburban songs, which had him performing at wedding parties, restaurants and cafés. Often backed here by nothing more than an accordion, a bass and a rickety cymbalom, he floats above the accompaniment with cantorial wisdom and a spine-tinglingly spooky falsetto. Although little translation is provided, the swooning misery of Siminicã is hard to misinterpret.—ML