



## FOCUS ON | worldbeat

### Bela Lakatos & The Gypsy Youth Project

The most authentic Hungarian Gypsy music doesn't get much exposure, even in Budapest. It's rural, traditional and at risk of fading into history. Bela Lakatos & The Gypsy Youth Project, the latest group featured on the "Introducing" series (World Music Network, **WMC**), is one of the few groups upholding the tradition. These young Roma musicians sing pieces gathered from expeditions to the countryside. The first track starts out with: "We'll tell the truth/How the Gypsies live in the world." Lyrics tell of a rough but joyful life, and the music is made for dancing sorrows away. It's vocal, harmonious and uproarious, with a bit of guitar and mandolin and a lot of rhythmic shouting in the background. Sticks, spoons, metal cans and "oral bass" add to the rhythm. It comes together as earthy and polished, definitely something fresh among the many Gypsy albums that have emerged in recent years.

— Jeff Gifford, Reno Gazette-Journal

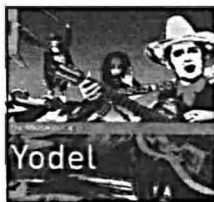
### "Sounds from a Bygone Age, Vol. 3"

Romanian legend Dona Dumitru Siminica sang like a heavyset woman slinking through the dark of a smoky tavern. In reality, he was a dapper, mustachioed man with a suit and thinning hair. His husky, alien falsetto, presented here from recordings made in the 1960s, made the somber Gypsy crooner a heartthrob in Iron-Curtain Bucharest. The songs on "Sounds from a Bygone Age, Vol. 3" (Asphalt Tango Records, **AT** 1/2) are gauzy tearjerkers that Siminica sang in pubs, cafes and on the radio. The vocals, along with accordion and violin flow like sap, while the jangling cymbalom tumbles, clatters and completely intensifies the surreal sense of lovesick confusion that pervades every note.

— Gifford

### "The Rough Guide to Yodel"

OK, if I say "yodelers," what pops into your mind? Austrians in lederhosen with bushy moustaches? Scrawny cowpokes by the campfire? Yeah, those are yodelers, but did you also think of Siberian



yak herders and African Pygmies, techno DJs and Bollywood singers, beatnik robots, Hawaiian falsettos and Mexican huastecos? They're all included on "The Rough Guide to Yodel" (World Music Network, **WMC**), a hoot of an

album that starts off with a brief yodeling lesson from Grammy-winning folksinger Cathy Fink before proceeding to break common stereotypes surrounding this primal and vital singing style. It's fun to hear the variety, but the disc begs for a sequel. The liner notes list far more musical styles that yodel than are included on the disc.

— Gifford

