

DE VOLKSKRANT

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The soprano of Savina Yannatou seems to have floated over from the mythological world of the seegod Phorcus: the Greek singer sings as seductive and out-of-this-worldly as his sirenes on those rocky islands. Yet is her repertoire quite earthly and on Songs of Thessaloniki it is based on the human history of that harbourcity and cultural meetingplace.

Yannatou and her accompanying group Primavera en Salonico worked the traditional song repertoire from many regions to ghostly beautiful contemporary world music. Of the sephardic folk song A la Scola de Allianza not much more is left than a melancholy melody on accordeon, a few lucid guitars and that enchanting voice of Yannatou, which makes this traditional music sound minimalist classical. The floating sensation remains throughout the antire album; From Iptidadan Yol Sorasan, in which the mystical nay flute claims the leadrole until a serbian lament which hovers on long, slow lines of violin and harmonica.

Amazing how the song cultures of the Balkan, the Middle East, Spain and even Ireland organically flow together to this universal, deeply meditative splendid music.

(Unofficial translation)