

Va Fan Fahre: cd release *Al wa' Debt* (ZEP010)

A Balkan brass band goes Arab ...



In October 2010, a third cd by Va Fan Fahre hits the shops. After the acclaimed previous CDs *Romski Robbery* and *Zet je maar*, the time seemed fit for a calculated risk. The collaboration with Moroccan singer Aicha Haskal on the previous CD, made the band decide to firmly root the new project into two radically different cultures at once. The result turns out to be a surprisingly natural fusion of Balkan brass band and Arab music.

Like the majority of the compositions, the title track is written by band leader Michael De Schryver. Other tracks are by Dieter Bossu (track 8: *Edala3 We3mel Mabadalak*) and Bertel Schollaert (tracks 5 & 6: *Addis* and *Belomi*

Benna). *Al Wa' Debt* also contains one cover: the luscious *Ya Habibi Taala* (My love is coming), as immortalized by the Egyptian singer Asmahan.

Aicha Haskal's vocals on five of the thirteen tracks prove an obvious added value to the album. Her supple, warm voice effortlessly switches between the classic Arab inflections, parlando and even rap. The lyrics of three of the tracks on *Al Wa' Debt* were written by the Brussels based Egyptian poet Abdelhamid Farag, who calls himself a 'poète de l' éloignement ' (poet of the absence). His writings are permeated by deep melancholy and romanticism.



But the Arab and Ethiopian influence are not the only changes in the band's repertoire. Michael De Schryver trades his accordion for rootsy organs and analogue synths. The percussion gets an extra spicy injection through the addition of the riqq (Arab tambourine) and carcabous (Moroccan castagnets). Another novelty with the rhythm section are the electric guitars of Eduardo Vega, which also yield some sparkling solo's, inspired by the Egyptian guitarist and composer Omar Khorshid.

The link with the Arab world also shows in the graphics and sleeve photography. The pictures are works by travel photographer Wim Pi, from the photoreports *'Nergens heen'* (*Vers nulle part*) and *Anna and my passport*, which he made throughout the Mediterranean and Minor Asia.



The final result is a fresh, modern, yet authentic and varied album. Al Wa' Debt is a record that without a doubt will appeal to an audience broader than the average diehard world music fan. It is packed with catchy tunes and infectious rhythms, nestling into the ear, and inviting you to shake a leg...

Cd release concerts

Sa 25 September - Tempo Color - Liège (B)
Sa 06 November - Amsterdam World – Amsterdam (NL)
Th 11 November – Centrale – Ghent (B)
Mo 29 November: Grand Mix - Tourcoing (FR)



Track list Al Wa' Debt

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. MonoPoly Inc. Disclosure | 7. Spices from Omar |
| 2. Nightrain to Beirut | 8. Edala3 We3mel Mabadalak |
| 3. Akwa Melly Fat | 9. Al Wa' Debt |
| 4. Lahzet Zekrayat | 10. VFF 123 |
| 5. Addis | 11. Ya Habibi Taala |
| 6. Belomi Benna | 12. MonoPoly Inc. Resolution |

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