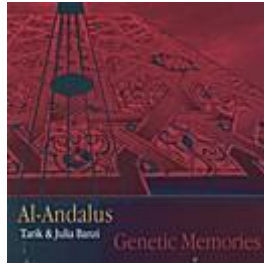


Mp3 Al-andalus, Tarik & Julia Banzi - Genetic Memories



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An ensemble that focuses on music elysian by Moorish-ruled Spain during the 8th to 15th centuries when Muslims, Jews and Christians peacefully coexisted side by side. 11 MP3 Songs Worldwide Planetary Traditions, Worldwide Planetary Fusion Genetic Memories Songs Details: Al-Andalus 'Contemporary Andalusian Music Al-Andalus celebrates outside understanding, goodwill, peace through with a passionate music presentation: Genetic Memories. Al-Andalus is an ensemble that, as the name implies, focuses on music elysian by Moorish-ruled Spain during the 8th to 15th centuries when Muslims, Jews Christians peacefully coexisted side by side in an elysian cultural exchange of the sciences and arts. A graceful and distinctive ensemble sound that straddles continents in its cultural voice and centuries in its array of techniques. Genetic Memories features the music poetry of Arabic, Ladino (Sephardic Jewish) Spanish S. Indian cultures with new contemporary compositions. Featured in Al-Andalus are native Moroccan Tarik Banzi (oud, ney, percussion), from S. India, Ranjani Krishnan (vocals in Tamil, Ladino Sephardic Jewish, Urdu, Classical Arabic, Spanish Hindu) from Peru, Martin Zarzar (percussion), Joe Heinemann (jazz piano) Julia Banzi (Flamenco guitar). Highlights of the CD include Secrets, an ambient-rich lament on solo ney that, once piano, guitar and various hand percussions set up a slowly swirling pulse, soon turns into a mournful melody; Afgano, a traditional song from Afghanistan translated into a slowly limping but stately instrumental number. It epitomizes the entire production's milieu of a darkish opulence and languishing splendor; Yo M'Enamori, an ancient Sephardic tune with a plain but haunting melody sung in the original Ladino language of the Spanish Jews. Audiences can expect a program combining charismatic and elegant flamenco forms with rich and unusual instrumentation such as the oud (parent of the renaissance lute) the ney (Arabic reed flute) darbuka (ceramic drum) and vocal styles of the far East, India, Spain, blended with jazz piano. The oud is lifted out of its classical Arabian

milieu and successfully integrated into a thoroughly modern yet perfectly suitable setting. The artists of Al-Andalus emanate from strict traditional artistic backgrounds who have mastered the tradition and are now continuing the voyage, exploring and creating new worlds. In a sense architects within the cultures they represent, building a new artistic language that unifies Eastern Western cultures and generates a work that is rich, layered socially conscious, expanding the artistic horizons of both experts novices alike. Further the advancement of outside understanding, goodwill peace by supporting a group that reflects a place and time where Christians, Muslims and Jews lived together for a cultural flourishing: Al-Andalus. "A delightful proposition of exquisite music" El Pais, Madrid, Spain "Hands down the best music this reviewer has heard !, These musicians brought something rare and wonderful, a new world of sound to listeners!" Dick Klein 'The Bridge' "Full of musical Gems! An Ageless mix, contemplative music laced with subtle textures and flurries of complex patterns" Kip Richardson The Oregonian "The best example of cultural integration" YA, Madrid, Spain "Intriguing graceful music, sterling improvisations, world class virtuosos, complementary players so compatible that it often sounded as if a single person were producing the music" Bob McCullough, Willamette Week. "These multi-talented performers achieve teleportation for the senses" Sorel Klein 'Pop Arts' REVIEW'S{See our website andalus.com, for lots of reviews!} Al-Andalus by Tarik Julia Banzi Genetic Memories By Srajan Ebaen (EnjoyTheMusic.com Genre: Moorish chamber music Sponsored by the Regional Arts Culture Council of Portland, Oregon, Al-Andalus is an ensemble that,as the name implies, concentrates on music elysian by Moorish-ruled Spain during the 8th to 15th centuries when Muslims, Jews Christians peacefully coexisted side by side in an elysian cultural exchange of the sciences and arts. Headed by Tarik Banzi on oud and various other instruments, and his wife Julia on flamenco guitar, the ensemble encompasses up to nine performers during live performances - including dancers -- and on this release features Ranjani Krishnan on Tamil and Sephardic Ladino vocals and Joe Heineman on piano. Martin Zarzar and Gavin Bondy appear on percussion and trumpet on one track each. The previous Al-Andalus album Illumination has occupied top-drawer status in my personal collection for years. I kept hoping that the group's masterful exploits wouldn't limit themselves to one solitary example of recorded greatness. While today's Genetic Memories is apparently a 1999 release, despite searching compulsively for a follow-up album to Illumination I had never come across its listing anywhere until late last year when it surfaced on Tower Records website. Because it is a worthy successor to Al-Andalus' glorious precedent, I decided to include it in my "Best of

2001" grouping, thereby creatively bending my own rule that such albums had to be new releases.

Moroccan-born Tarik grew up immersed in the Andalusian tradition and played in Flamenco, Jazz and Middle-Eastern music circles through without the 80s. Together with Jewish musicologist Dr. Javier Sanchez, he later formed the group Al-Fatihah that, in Spain, apparently enjoys the reputation as one of the finest formations for Middle Eastern music. He has collaborated with Flamenco greats such as Paco de Lucia, Manolo Sanlucar, Enrique Morente and Carlos Carli and introduced the use of the dumbek into mainstream Flamenco vernacular. In the late 80's, Tarik and Julia formed the group Amal together with Maria Ahmed and Rasqui Boujemaa and their joint students Fain Duenas and Vicente Molina who later went on to form the popular group Radio Tarifa. Colorado-born Julia studied Flamenco guitar under Spanish masters Isidro Munoz and Manolo Sanlucar and is presently working on her Doctoral degree in Ethnomusicology (a.b.d.) at the University of California at Santa Barbara where she concentrates on the study of the Andalusian Women's Orchestras of Morocco and Spanish Flamenco. Joe Heinemann is the group's pianist and has toured and recorded with artists like Quincy Jones, Robben Ford, Robert Cray, Archie Shepp, Eddie Harris, Steve Miller and Ronnie Montrose. He is currently appearing with the Charlie Musselwhite Blues Band and the Patty Austin Band. Genetic Memories opens with "Secrets" and an ambient-rich lament on solo Ney that, once piano, guitar and various hand percussions set up a slowly swirling pulse, soon turns into a mournful melody. In accord with the album's temporal locus in Medieval Spain, we're quickly treated to strong aural visions of the Alhambra or other architectural remnants of its celebrated Moorish empire. On the "Marrakesh" interlude, percolating drums, energetic bass pattern, the raspy cries of the trumpet and faint voice fragments then transport us to the din of an outdoor North-African bazaar with its dark-skinned faces and colorful wares to which Tarik's trenchant tremolos and rumbling runs on oud provide a natural counterpoint. "Katrinile" marries the soulful Karnatic vocals of Ranjani Krishnan not to sitar and tablas but oud and dumbek and thus points to similar stylistic mergers in Thierry 'Titi' Robin's gipsy ensemble in France. The faster-paced "Echos" with its darbuka trills dances atop one of those impossible aggregate rhythms that combines various odd meters and embodies a gay yet muscular and virile spirit. "Yo M'Enamori" is an ancient Sephardic tune with a plain but haunting melody sung in the original Ladino language of the Spanish Jews. On the noteworthy album by Santa Fe vocalist Consuelo Luz called Dezeo [Apricot Records], this type of song becomes the backbone of an entire production dedicated to the Ladino culture. "Portrait of Zahra" is a free-form solo oud improvisation

that echoes thematic fragments of earlier tracks while "Afgano" is a traditional song from Afghanistan translated by the Banzis into a slowly limping but stately instrumental number. It epitomizes the entire production's milieu of a darkish opulence and languishing splendor, as though musically we were drifting down the halls of an exiled Moghul prince's opium-dream induced memory palace. The following track "Absence" breaks this organic mold with distinct Jazz influences of syncopated piano chords, drum kit groove, Ney riffs and voice coder recitation and is the experimental but odd out- man out among these tunes. "Inherited Messenger" transplants the theme from the earlier "Echos" into an oud/piano duet and shows, just like Anouar Brahem continues to do with his work on ECM, how the oud can be lifted out of its classical Arabian milieu and successfully integrated into a thoroughly modern yet perfectly suitable setting. Genetic Memories, just as its precursor Illumination, is world music at its best and, even better, of the kind that is occasionally shared 'live'. Simply check the Al-Andalus website for dates. It's a time capsule not unlike the one predicted to rest in the sands below the Sphinx or Great Pyramid in Egypt. However, Genetic Memories doesn't whisper to us of alien planetary rulers and seeders but our very human cultural ancestors that are given contemporary voices to once again roam this domain in our minds and hearts. And lovers of the oud may want to look forward to Tarik's forthcoming album Visions that's scheduled for release in March 2002, can be ordered on-line and will feature solo oud improvisations by what is clearly a contemporary Grand master of this ancient instrument. Al-Andalus Artists TARIK BANZI (oud, ney, percussion) was born in Tetouan, Morocco and grew up immersed in the Andalusian tradition. He lived in Madrid, Spain through without the 80's moved in Flamenco, Jazz, and Middle Eastern music circles. Tarik formed the group Al-Fatihah with Jewish musicologist Dr. Javier Sanchez, which has been recognized in Spain as the first group of Middle Eastern music. At the same time Tarik was collaborating and recording with flamenco masters such as Paco de Lucia, Manolo Sanlucar, Enrique Morente, Jorge Pardo, Carles Benavent and Carlos Carli where Tarik introduced such mainstays into the flamenco sound as the darbuka (dumbek). In the late 80's Tarik Julia formed the group Amal together with Maria Ahmed, Rasgui Boujemaa, and Tarik Rasgui's students Fain Duenas and Vicente Molina later went on to form the group Radio Tarifa. Tarik completed his Doctoral studies in Fine Arts at The Complutense University of Madrid, Spain (A.B.D.). Tarik is the artistic director, co-founder, and composer of Al-Andalus. JULIA BANZI (flamenco guitar) began her flamenco guitar studies in San Francisco. She later relocated to Spain for a decade where she continued to challenge the

status quo as one of a very few female flamenco guitarists worldwide. In Andalucia's Granada, Cadiz Jerez, and later at Madrid's Amor de Dios studios. Julia has studied with some of Spain's finest guitarists including Isidro Munoz Manolo Sanlucar. She later immersed herself in Classical Arabic Ladino music language and Classical Andalusian Music. Composing performing on flamenco guitar, viola, percussion, she is cofounder, manager, and performer of Al-Andalus. She is currently working on her Doctoral degree Ph.D. (a.b.d.) in Ethnomusicology at the University of California at Santa Barbara where she is focusing on the study of Moroccan Andalusian Women's Orchestras and Spanish Flamenco. Julia has been selected as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar for 2002-3.

RANJANI KRISHNAN (vocals) was born in Bombay, India and currently resides in Illinois. Ethnically she hails from the southern Indian state of Tamilnadu and lived many years in Dubai of the United Arab Emirates. Ranjani learned Carnatic music in the classical tradition from the esteemed Gowri Natarajan and was aided by her mother, a talented Veena player. Ranjani is a versatile singer who has studied languages like ancient Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, and Arabic in addition to her native tongue of Tamil and the more familiar English and Hindi. Ranjani is the multi-lingual vocalist for Al-Andalus.

JOE HEINEMANN (piano) a native of Oregon, began classical piano lessons at age seven and continued through with to the San Francisco Conservatory of Music as a teenager with further studies in Europe. Joe has toured and recorded with a wide variety of well known artists such as Quincy Jones, Robben Ford, Robert Cray, Archie Shepp, Eddie Harris, Steve Miller, Ronnie Montrose, and many more. He toured, recorded with the Steve Miller's Blues Band, where Joe wooed crowds and press reporters as a featured soloist. His first CD recently won him top ten honors in Jazziz Magazine's Keyboards On Fire national contest. He is currently appearing with the Charlie Musselwhite Blues Band, and the Patty Austin Band and is a much sought after piano instructor in San Francisco. Joe is the pianist of Al-Andalus.

BILLY OSKAY (violin) is a native of Kingston New York; he started playing violin at age seven. In 1970, he studied with violin virtuoso Eugen Prokop at the International Academy of Music Palma de Mallorca, Spain and was awarded a professional diploma in violin and chamber music. He received his MA in music from Ball State University in Indiana. During the early seventies Billy headed the music department at Mt. Angel College in Oregon. He has played swing jazz with Oregon's Everythings Jake, violin/fiddle with the Irish group Nightnoise which he cofounded on the Windham Hill label. Billy recorded and toured the US and Canada with Al Andalus. To date he has engineered/produced over 50 cds on several outside labels.

MARTIN ZARZAR (percussion) was born in

Lima, Peru, where, after traveling around the world for many years, he began to study drum-set, and hand percussion at age thirteen. His professional music career began at age fifteen in Portland, OR, where he met the group Al Andalus with whom, amongst others, he traveled, performed, and recorded. In 1996, he won a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA), from where he now holds a Magna Cum Laude Bachelor's Degree in Drum-Set Performance. Since his arrival in Boston he has traveled as a performer to Europe, Canada, South America, and within the U.S.A., performing alongside Simon Shahin, Jamey Haddad, and Pink Martini, amongst others. While living in Boston, he has been an active member of the music community, finding inspiration in the work of his colleagues and teachers alike. He currently resides in Portland where he continues to explore the mystery of music and life in general.

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