

Mp3 Bob Weisenberg - American Gypsy



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Passionate, earthy flamenco that takes the music back to its roots, as Bob learned it living among gypsy masters in Andalusia. 9 MP3 Songs

WORLD: Flamenco, LATIN: Flamenco Details: The following article appeared just after Bob returned to the U.S. after living in southern Spain. It remains the best description of the music on *American Gypsy*.

FLAMENCO (GYPSY STYLE) By Bob Albers

In case you weren't paying attention when it happened, Milwaukee gained a new flamenco guitarist a couple of months ago, and he has brought with him a brand of flamenco that is rarely heard in America. As a friend of mine said after we heard him for the first time a couple of weeks ago, It was just like the last time Miles Davis came to town. The music just took your head and there was nothing you could do about it. And my friend isn't particularly into flamenco. The guitarist is Bob Weisenberg and his performance that night included the more familiar forms of flamenco: Soleares, Siguiriyas, Bulerias, Alegrias and Granadinas. During the performance I became even more excited than my friend because the only flamenco I had heard that sounded similar was in an anthology of gypsy flamenco I had purchased directly from Spain. In fact, in many instances the technique, intonation and the feelings Weisenberg expressed were dead ringers for the Spanish album. And no wonder. Weisenberg had just spent a year in Spain living and studying with some of the gypsy guitarists that had been recorded in the anthology. To be exact, he took a room near the Caf Pepe in the town of Moron de la Frontera, where the famous gypsy guitarist Diego del Gastor and his nephews live. Weisenberg fell in with Diego, studying formally with both Diego and his nephews and also attending many juergas (all night flamenco jam sessions) at the Caf Pepe. Weisenberg was even invited to join some gypsy singers, relatives of Diego, for a few days in a mountain finca (ranch). There he had a good time accompanying the singers and doing all the things you're supposed to do in a mountain finca. After a year in that sort of environment, Weisenberg has discovered his style and attitude toward

flamenco now run counter to the trend set by the new generation of flamenco guitarists. The new school attempts to combine classical guitar techniques (and much classical material) with the flamenco forms. The result is an extremely fast florid music that sacrifices the rhythmic accents and duende (soul) of the flamenco forms. And so Weisenberg is now trying to present the gypsy style and feeling for flamenco in solo form. That is not an easy task because flamenco in its richest form is a joint project involving guitarist, singer, dancer, and jaleos (rhythmic clappers). For the guitar alone to capture all this is impossibility. Yet a good gypsy guitarist, possessed with the proper duende, can go far in stirring the soul of his listener. It is largely a matter of intonation of making some notes sing, some notes crisp and a matter of accenting the relentless drive of the rhythm. At any rate, Bob Weisenberg can convey this gypsy feeling. This has meant a large change in playing technique for Weisenberg, who had gone a long way into classical-flamenco techniques while a student at Stanford University. For two years prior to leaving for Spain, he studied intensively with Enrique Ruiz de Luzuriaga, practicing as much as eight and nine hours a day. By the time he left for Spain his playing was far beyond the amateur stage. In Spain, Weisenberg found that he had a good technical background, but that to play with gypsy duende you needed, among other things, a good thumb. The thumb puts power and expressiveness into the playing and with practice it becomes extremely fast. Also, gypsy playing makes heavy use of the golpe (tapping of the guitar top) to accent rhythms. To use the golpe effectively requires a feel for the rhythm that can probably only be acquired by being immersed in an atmosphere of good gypsy flamenco. Anyway, Bob Weisenberg is good and you should hear him. You don't even have to know a thing about flamenco to have fun. People who are interested in Diego del Gastor Son de la Frontera Paco del Gastor should consider this download.

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