

Mp3 Laila Salins - Saskandinot



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Sultry, soulful drinking songs and ballads with a gypsy flavor and an existential twist, sung with passionate abandon by Latvian singer Laila Salins - with a vivid accompaniment of lauto, accordion, clarinet, violin, flute and percussion. 12 MP3 Songs WORLD: Eastern European, FOLK: Traditional Folk

Details: "Imagine a collection of drinking songs, poems and ballads from a small, seemingly lost and long-oppressed country on the far-off Baltic Sea, a country sandwiched in between Scandinavia and the dark Slavic world. Imagine listening to one song after another obsessed with death, gloom, misery and unrequited love and then finding yourself so uplifted, so filled with the spirit of the muse as to take your breath away, seduced by minor-key song that turns deep pessimism into beauty and life-affirmation. The place is Latvia and the creators of this verbal and musical poetry are little-known to most of us. The person who has revealed this world to us is Laila Salins, a classically trained singer of Latvian descent and of great vocal and personal beauty, talent and intelligence. She crosses all the old barriers to open a door to the riches of a culture where deep, ancient and ancestral strains meet the contemporary worlds of folk and popular music, all in a mix that is as true to its roots as it is original, moving and articulate for our latter day." Eric Salzman (composer, producer, reviewer, author of "Twentieth Century Music: An Introduction") "Saskandinot" - its the Latvian word for toasting: the clinking of glasses; the resonance that arises from it; an affirmation of affinities. Still more - its my desire to reconcile and re-harmonize different strands of experience. I grew up with this rich culture and ancient language just beyond the skyline of New York, hearing tales of a land which I truly only encountered many years later with a life-changing intensity. Saskandinot is a collection of songs from my own idiosyncratic Latvian psyche, reconfigured on a far-away shore. Some of these songs Ive heard since childhood - at late-night celebrations; or around a blazing fire; or in my parents living room, where artists of all sorts often gathered. These songs seemed

strangely familiar, as if the knowledge of distant joys and sorrows had been passed down through the blood. Two of the drinking songs come from the rich Latvian folk tradition: one is a rambunctious tune exalting the magic of barley hops, while drinking and singing till dawn, (I pounded the banquet table); and one from the perspective of a solitary and proud woman who tills the fields on her own, without the help of men who, all too often, succumbed to drink (Beer, beer and brandywine). There are two songs one anonymous (Fog mists the pane), and one by the composer Dace Aperans (Dreams on the dime-store stoop) - based on the poetry of Aleksandrs _aks, an influential poet of post-WWI Riga (Latvias capital city), who left behind poems of transcendent longing, both spiritual and romantic, with a tenderly cynical world view. And there are melodies that were passed down through decades of late-night brooding and celebrating, based on verses written by earlier poets, born around the turn of the 20th century: Fricis B_rda and J_nis Zieme_nieks, whose tragically brief lives were nonetheless characterized by an ability to filter sorrow and disappointment through black humor and irony (Life, sweet life; In this gloomy tavern; and Friends, why mourn?). The contemporary Latvian composer, Imants Zemzaris, has set a bittersweet love poem of M_ris _aklais, who passed away recently in Riga (Song for four in the morning). There is also a song written together with my friend and lauto player, Jim Matus - an ode to midsummers eve in the city (Toasting). I set to music two poems of my father, Gunars Sali__, who is a beloved Latvian poet on both sides of the Atlantic. His playful surrealism sets off sparks of light even in the darkest of places (Eat of me, drink of me and Uearthed). And, finally, theres also an anonymous song of tortured love (Gypsy). I am deeply grateful to the musicians who brought these songs to life: the rich flights of fancy of accordionist extraordinaire Bill Schimmel (founder of The Tango Project, performer, and composer), the wild and fearless Alicia Svigals on violin (virtuoso klezmer fiddler, a founder of the Klezmatics and Mikveh), the soulful cello playing of Lutz Rath (St. Lukes Orchestra, Elysium String Quartet); Perry Robinsons wise and playful spirit on clarinet (the Brubeck Family; Gunter Hampel; Raga Roni); and the dynamic percussionists: Brian Caudle, Marty Elster, John de Kadt and Michel Moushabeck. My dear and gifted sister, Lalita Salins (Kolibri), plays flute and sings back-up vocals; and two young bass players contributed their talents - Jason Schwartz on acoustic bass (Jason Schwartz Project), and Joe OBrien on electric bass, whose sister Jill OBrien joined me on back-up vocals (both of Mawwal and Metacomet). Most of all, I was supported and encouraged by Jim Matus (creator of Mawwal and Paranoise), whose luscious lauto playing provided the initial sound fabric for the weaving together of these songs. (Laila

Salins) People who are interested in Cesria vora Lhasa Amlia Rodrigues should consider this download.

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