

## Mp3 Azigza - Kriya



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a trip to the heart of Africa the Middle East, with stops in the Balkans, tickets by ProgAirways, the Fusion Station. If you like Led Zeppelin, King Crimson and Mahavishnu Orchestra, get on the plane for AZIGZA's second journey. 11 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Fusion, WORLD: Balkan Show all album songs: Kriya Songs Details: Gnosis review Transition albums are treacherous, a transition album as a sophomore release a challenge to the extreme. How does a band go from their first lineup to their second ...while still gaining forward momentum and creating a cohesive album? Based on the talent on their debut release, I'd probably have put my money on Azigza. Based on Kriya, I'd have won the jackpot. After several seat changes among the trio of percussionists and the loss of vocalist Cyokha Grace (at least as a permanent fixture) around the release of their last EP X to Y, the question was to which guise was this bay area ensemble to wear on the follow-up to what was one of the finest world/rock albums to ever grace the CD format. With such a wide repertoire of instruments and such an eclectic multiplicity of global musical elements, the only question left was what color the brew would look like when the melting pot had been stirred.... Violin, guitar and bass lines seem to take even more from the complex weaving of King Crimson, but the atmospheres are not chilly and clinical, rather they ride on atmospheres of drumming and vocals, vocals that are less the one woman front they were and more an ensemble effort. The music tends much more to a tapestry effect, interlocking string and drum lines that weave a complexity in unity, almost Sufi-like. That the two versions of the band are intermixed actually works very well; it's only in the shadings of the music that the differences lie, and it gives the overall effort the richness of character that always keeps things interesting even at its length.... Azigza are indeed a melting pot and that pot has been stirred until all the elements blend in evenly, an effort that belies simple descriptions of rock or world music. In an era when music has been reduced to styles and tributes, Azigza are so ahead of their

contemporaries it's almost embarrassing. Their emphasis on spirit gives this a consciousness that resonates with you long after the album is over. GROUND AND SKY PROG REVIEW Given that Azigza's debut album was pretty much universally hailed as a brilliant meshing of progressive rock and various "world musics", it's odd that no one even seemed to notice Kriya, the follow-up album, until practically a year after its release. Even now, it seems underappreciated and rarely discussed, which is a shame, as it's in many ways a better album than its predecessor. Vocalist Cyoakha Grace, who dominated the first album ....is no longer a full member of the band, though she does provide the vocals on a number of tracks. The vocals are now more of a group effort, which benefits the band as a whole since other singers as well as the instrumentalists are allowed more room to shine. Kriya seems slightly less richly produced - a bit more clinical - than its predecessor, perhaps because of the loss of Cyoakha Grace's full leads, but also perhaps because of a distinct shift towards a style of interplay between guitars and violins that reminds very strongly of 1980s King Crimson. "The Wall" in particular sounds like its guitar and bass tracks could have come straight off of Discipline. The other tracks distinguish themselves a bit more, however. "Yaman" is a blissful nine-minute organic soundscape full of flute, softly swelling strings, quiet percussion, and Cyoakha Grace's lilting vocals placed slightly back in the mix. "A Bulgarian Suite" reminds of "Ratzinitza" from the debut album with energetic strings playing traditional Bulgarian melodies and building to a tremendous climax full of pounding percussion. And the closer, "X", is perhaps the most prog-rock of the whole bunch, achieving what I think is a near-perfect mix of rock and folk elements, with more Crimsonish guitar and bass interwoven with complex violin lines that break out periodically into more exotic melodies. Oh, and there's a sweet (if brief) guitar solo in there to boot. Azigza has really carved out a unique niche for themselves; they are without a doubt one of the only American bands out there that is capable of combining rock elements with genuine "world music" elements without sounding fake or condescending.... ground and sky 1999-2007

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