

Mp3 Conjunto Jardin - Floreando



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Sisters Libby Cindy Harding and their supercharged band reinvigorate the lively jarocho music of Veracruz, Mexico. 11 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Traditions, LATIN: General Details: Floreando is the second CD release from Los Angeles-based Conjunto Jardn. Inspired by the group's 2001 trip to Tlacotalpan, Veracruz, Mexico, to participate in the annual son jarocho extravaganza Encuentro de Jaraneros, the new CD combines the rhythmic drive and virtuosic sparkle associated with the port city of Veracruz with the more rural, roots-oriented and percussion-flavored style typical of Mono Blanco, Son de Madera and Los Cojolites, Veracruz groups prominent in the current resurgence of jarocho music. The only son jarocho group led by women, Conjunto Jardn features sisters Libby and Cindy Harding-the name is a play on the Spanish pronunciation of their last name-on the traditional Veracruz jarana, a small strummed rhythm guitar, and requinto, a 4-string lead guitar plucked with a long bone pua or pick. Their sibling vocal harmonies, riding atop hard-charging jaranas, driving cajn-and-bass rhythm section and sparkling harp-like keyboards, focus a fresh, modern sound that is at once quite faithfully traditional and at the same time possessed of an accessible, rock-influenced drive and a certain - dare we say it? - commercial edge. Bailable (danceable) is not a term often applied to son jarocho, even though the percussive footwork called zapateado is an integral part of the tradition. But from the first notes of the opening track-"El Cols," a typically irreverent jarocho classic about a flirty guy-there's an undeniable groove going on that's a little different from what you might expect, and substantially funkier. The upbeat, driving "El Torito" (The Little Bull) will satisfy fans of the group's first album, and its medley-mate "El Toro Zacamand" (The Magic Bull) percolates with raw energy. But the CD's real surprise is in the slower tracks-the restrained, hypnotic chant of "El Coco" and, especially, "La Guanbana," with its almost classical arrangement and deliberate build-up and release that echos the song's lyrics of yearning

sexuality. Connecting the dots from Veracruz to Cuba and back to Africa is Marcel Adjibi from Benin, West Africa on cajn, the wooden box drum originated by black slaves in the Americas. His swelling crescendos and African vocal touches add an insistent, below-the-waist rhythmic sway that makes tangible what's often debated by scholars of son jarocho: the genre's African roots. ("La Bamba" was written by an African ex-slave in the 1800s.) Gary Johnson deploys traditional percussion instruments the quijada (donkey jawbone) and pandero (octagonal tambourine) when he's not transforming his keyboard into a Veracruz folk harp, and Rick Moors' electric bass often seems to bridge Mexican and African traditions. The new CD benefits from the addition of Chiapas, Mexico native Jorge Mijangos, a talented multi-instrumentalist whose powerful, precise jarana playing, lyrical meanderings on leona (baritone requinto) and honeyed vocals add weight and dimension. Also a master luthier, Jorge has constructed many of the band's instruments. At the mixing controls once again was Larry Hirsch, known for his work with Los Lobos, Ry Cooder, Bonnie Raitt and many others. Peruvian composer/producer Ciro Hurtado (Huayucalta) engineered the recording, while also contributing an evocative guitar solo on the Afro-Peruvian-influenced "La Guanbana." The roots of Conjunto Jardn go back to '80s nueva cancin group Sabi: Cindy, Libby and Gary were all key participants. Cindy also plays in Andean fusion group Huayucalta, and Marcel and Rick were both in Word of Mouth, Libby and Gary's Latin folk/rock group whose 1995 CD Somewhere in the World received glowing reviews and considerable airplay across the U.S. and Canada. Conjunto Jardn's first release, Nuevo Son Jarocho (1998), got excellent notices and radio play; its track "La Bruja" was featured on Putumayo World Music's 2001 compilation Music of Mexico. Conjunto Jardn is dedicated to the growth and diffusion of all jarocho music: leader Libby Harding actively promotes son jarocho events throughout Southern California, and they even sell other groups' CDs at Jardn shows. With their meticulous, savvy arrangements and rocket-fueled rhythmic drive, Conjunto Jardn is well-positioned to help bring to this underappreciated musical genre-and its many fine exponents-the attention it and they so richly deserve. "In their new recording, Conjunto Jardin revitalizes the joyful and polyrhythmic music of Veracruz, Mexico known as son jarocho. Their unique rendition of classic songs connects the more accessible styles of son with the roots of this traditional genre." -Betto Arcos, former music director, KPFK, Los Angeles For more information, please visit conjuntojardin.com.

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