

Mp3 Helen Rivero And Ian Blake - Luminous



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Voiceplay diva meets multi-instrumental sonic meddler for an hour of night music and lullabies from around the world: soothing or scary, always 'fascinating and charming' (fROOTS). 17 MP3 Songs

WORLD: World Fusion, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: This beautifully packaged CD is the work of two of Australia's most inventive world musicians. Helen Rivero is a captivating performer known for her singing of Spanish and Sephardic material: on 'Luminous' she stretches out with her cast of characters, improvising with voiceplay and revelling in the texture of a dozen languages. Ian Blake brings multi-instrumental talent and sound design to the project: you'll hear the cittern, lyre, bass clarinet, celtic harp, mbira, soprano sax and bass harmonica plus evocative soundscapes. Here's a recent review by Mark D. Moss in 'Sing Out!' Helen Rivero is a singer and composer born in Sydney, Australia, to Spanish immigrants who has focused her work on jazz, cabaret and folk songs from around the world. Ian Blake is a British transplant multi-instrumentalist who has worked with English country dance group Pyewackett, Eric Bogle, and British world music chameleon Andrew Cronshaw. For this stunningly recorded collection, these two artists bring all those influences and styles to a mix of lullabies from around the world, including pieces in Zulu, Yiddish, French, Russian, Creole, Italian, Micmac and many more (17 pieces in all).

Rivero is a singer who is nothing if not unique. She uses her voice as a supple musical instrument, effortlessly darting from the lyric to vocalese and sound effects, painting a striking, often haunting, series of minipaintings from each of the cultures represented here. Blake is an instrumental master, providing a broad range of sensitively played arrangements for these pieces with an arsenal of woodwinds, keyboards and strings. Peter Kennard (percussion) and Julian Thompson (cello) fill out the ensemble. The excellent production is pure and clean, very reminiscent of Blake's production work on Andrew Cronshaw's award winning release Ochre from last year. It is a joy just to listen to the sound of this

recording, with each vocal and instrument cleanly presented with a "whole" sound ... open and clear. The material seems to be a mixture of traditional and composed music from, literally, all over the world. It's both a tribute to the artistry of the duo that the material works together and that each piece stands up independently of the whole. I wish there was more background about the material provided. In the end, though, this is music that stands on its own. I don't want to mistakenly make it seem like this is any kind of folkloric work, but if you're open to a cool, jazzy take on tradition from true musical masters, this is a beautiful recording well worth the effort to find. And here's Jaslyn Hall in the Australian magazine 'Limelight' 'The centrepiece of this album is Helen Rivero's voice. Her vocal control is amazing and, coupled with a rich tone and strong interpretative power, it makes Luminous compelling listening. Ian Blake complements her voice with an instrumental soundscape filled with equally complex textures and delicate solos. Like most original work, Luminous is a challenge to describe but very easy to listen to. The CD is a collection of 17 lullabies from around the world, and Rivero and Blake have done extensive research with songs sung in Zulu, Italian, Welsh, Yiddish, Greek and Icelandic to name a few. But this description only tells half the story. Each lullaby is given a quirky, original arrangement using word play, vocal acrobatics, woodwinds, percussion, keyboard and strings to create songs that sometimes shimmer as in dreams or quiver on the threshold of excitement. Much of Luminous is exceptionally enjoyable and the duo must be great to see live in concert. This is music with a triple purpose. First, it's a celebration of this Australian duo's musical friendship. Second, it draws the listener to the wealth of music from around the world. Finally, it forces you to look outside your preconceived notions of music genres - not a bad thing for musicians and listeners alike. Luminous allows us considerable breathing space to dream for a bright and peaceful future.' And Paul Petran, of ABC Radio National's 'Music Deli', had this to say: 'They've treated the material in a way that is totally refreshing. The music is confident, engaging and has a wonderful element of surprise. It's a fine new CD from these two talented musicians.' As Mark Moss pointed out in his review, the background information on the CD is a bit sparse, so here are some track-by-track details: Helen and Ian are joined on this recording by percussionist Peter Kennard, cellist Julian Thompson, yayla tanbur player Paul Koerbin and members of the Canberran wildlife community. We should also point out that this release marks Helen's recording debut as a pixiphonist. 1. O Tula (Zulu) your mother is in the hills, on the zigzag trailshe will bring you a treat. Peter plays shakers and metal percussion, Ian plays cittern and guitar. 2. Nani Nani (Sephardic) The child's mother sings: 'sleep,

my soul, my life, while the father says: 'I come home very tired from ploughing the fields.' Helen's voice merges at the end with a swarm of bees and some drones from a passing double bass ... 3. Gleam Improvisation with Peter Kennard on percussion and Julian Thompson on cello, Helen's voice and Ian's soprano sax. 4. Rozinkes mit Mandlen (Yiddish) A widow sings a song of prophecy it will be your calling trading in raisins and almonds some day you will wander the world, you will grow rich, someday Ian plays keyboards, and duets on bass clarinet with Helen. Peter plays junk percussion. 5. Le Chat Jeanette/ Cola (French) 'when he wants to make himself beautiful, he washes his nose with saliva...' Helen duets with Tiger, a small kitten with a mighty purr. Ian plays melodica, soprano sax and cittern - from Canberra maker Gillian Alcock. Peter plays frame drum. 6. Pium Paum (Finnish) innocently cradle swinging enjoy your life some day bells will clang your soul will roam on The piece begins with a peal of saucepans from Peter. Ian plays guitar, Helen plays pixiphone. 7. Akh ty nochenka (Russian) dark little night with whom shall I pass the time? We do not live peacefully as one Ian plays four bass clarinets. 8. Dust Improvisation with bass clarinet, joined by voice, percussion, gu-cheng (a Chinese zither) and cello. 9. Ela hypne (Greek) '...grow big as a mountain, straight and tall as a cypress tree.' The crickets of Canberra set the scene: Ian plays thumb piano and brass-strung harp [by the Rigby brothers of Victoria: James and Andy]. The harp also appears at the end, wind-driven by a backyard breeze. Paul Koerbin makes a cameo appearance on yayla tanbur, which resembles a bowed bass banjo. 10. La rivyer Tanier (Creole) Concerning African slaves who had to find extra food to survive. '...walking by the river Tanier, I meet an old grandma and an old grandpa fishing. They say: 'one must work to eat Ian plays harp, bass, melodica, reed organ. Peter gives the junk percussion another workout. 11. Sofu unga stin mn (Icelandic) ...the rain is crying... black sand, glaciers, bones ...' A dialogue for voice and guitar based on an Icelandic lullaby. Ian plays guitar and sax, which introduces fragments of the 17th century English dance tune 'Lull me beyond thee'. 12. Naa ska'en liten (Norwegian) now the little one shall have sleep so sweet so warm and so soft Voice and piano improvise freely around this Norwegian lullaby. 13. Ba ba (Micmac) Two harps here, both from the Rigbys, one nylon and one brass strung. Seedpod shakers and a big goatskin tambourine. 14. Flicker Ian: soprano sax. Julian: cello. Helen: voice. Peter: percussion, gu-cheng. 15. Fi la nanae mi bel fiol (Italian) Ian plays tenor recorder and bass harmonica. Helen duets with herself as mother and crone... 16. Suo gn (Welsh) nothing is able to disturb your composure smiling gently do not fear, only a leaf beats on the door a little wave makes a lapping noise on the seashore Voice and piano.

17. Om Tare (Tibetan mantra, melody by Helen) Just voice ... Tara is a female Buddha loved in Tibet: she is a symbol of compassionate action. For more information, go to helenrivero.com

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