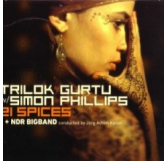


Trilok Gurtu Simon Phillips & NDR Big Band – 21 Spices (2011)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 27 August 2014 15:42 -

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01. *Piece Of Five* 914 02. *Beaucoup* 528 03. *Kuruk Setra* 943 04. *Balahto* 636 05. *Broken Rhythms* 415 06. *Jhulelal* 1020 07. *21 Spices* 926 Trilok Gurtu- Percussion & Vocal Roland Cabezas- Guitar Michel Alibo- Bass Simon Phillips- Drums and NDR Bigband conducted by Jorg Achim Keller: Vladyslav Senddecki- Keyboards Thorsten Benkenstein- Trumpet Ingolf Burkhardt- Trumpet Stephan Meinberg- Trumpet Phillip Kacza- Trumpet Dan Gottshall- Trombone Klaus Heidenreich- Trombone Stefan Lottermann- Trombone Ingo Lahme- Bass Trombone Fiete Felsch- Alto sax Peter Bolte- Alto sax Matthias Erlewein- Tenor sax Bjorn Berger- Tenor sax Lutz Buchner- Tenor sax Frank Delle- Baritone Sax, Bass Clarinet Marcio Doctor- Percussion

Some of the stodgier individuals in the jazz world labor under the delusion that a big-band project is not legitimate unless it sounds like something Buddy Rich would have done in the '50s and is full of overdone warhorse standards that have been recorded by literally hundreds, if not thousands, of different artists over the years. But thankfully, not everyone in jazz sees things that way. *21 Spices*, in fact, takes big-band music into both the jazz-rock fusion realm and the world jazz realm. This 2011 release is a collaboration between Indian percussionist Trilok Gurtu (who composed all of the material), drummer Simon Phillips, and Germany's NDR Big Band; also on board are Michel Alibo on electric bass and Roland Cabezas on electric guitar. And with this lineup in place, the result is a fusion album that has a strong world music influence and sounds a bit *Weather Report*-ish in spots, only with the muscular horn section that the NDR Big Band brings to the table. Naturally, Gurtu's mastery of Indian percussion and the wordless, Indian-style scat vocals that the Mumbai native provides gives *21 Spices* (which contains both live and studio performances) some Indian appeal at times, but Indian music is hardly the only world music influence that asserts itself on this 55-minute CD. Actually, Latin music is a more prominent influence, especially on "*Broken Rhythms*" and "*1-2 Beaucoup*." Meanwhile, "*Balato*" and "*Jhulelal*" both incorporate elements of African music. So in terms of world music influences, *21 Spices* is pleasingly far-reaching. And it is also an exciting demonstration of the fact that regardless of what bop snobs have to say, big-band recordings don't have to recycle old Buddy Rich charts in order to have validity. --- Alex Henderson, Rovi

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