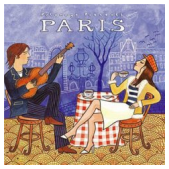
Putumayo Presents Paris (2006)



01. Thomas Fersen - Au Cafe de la Paix (4:02)
02. Coralie Clement - Samba de Mon Coeur Qui Bat (3:52)
03. Karpatt - Dites Moi Tu (4:26)
04. Carla Bruni - Quelqu'un M'a Dit (2:43) *play*
05. Pascal Parisot - Je Reste au Lit (3:53)
06. Keren Ann - Jardin d'Hiver (2:56)
07. Tryo - Serre-Moi (3:46)
08. Paris Combo - Lettre A P... (3:29)
09. Presque Oui - L'ongle (2:59) *play*
10. Amelie-Les-Crayons - Ta P'tite Flamme (3:52)
11. Myrtille - Les Pages (2:37)
12. Aldebert - Carpe Diem (3:31)

Following the successful French Café compilation, Putumayo here updates the French sound, but in a tricky way. The sound on this album is again chanson, the music of the French café culture. Now though, it's the core of la nouvelle scène instead: younger, more world-influenced artists performing chanson with their own touches and flair. The sound is an excellent one. While many of the males evoke Serge Gainsbourg and the females Edith Piaf to some degree, there's a contemporary feel. The samba is more prominent, with lilting acoustic guitars and the occasional homage to Astrud Gilberto. The sounds -- once epitomized by Georges Brassens -- are given a less folk-inspired feel in favor of a more urban one, but the emotions are similar. There's weariness, heartbreak, longing, and occasionally outright madness inherent in the lyrics and the emotive qualities of the vocals. While chanson is perhaps one of the best examples of a dated music (if one hears chanson, it's obviously in a period format, on a scratchy record, etc.), this compilation shows off what's new. While entirely deferential (and referential) to the old masters, there's just enough updating to create that contemporary aspect, but not so much as to destroy the simple pleasure of French café music. An excellent introduction to the field of French music at large, but especially chanson. ---Adam Greenberg, Rovi

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