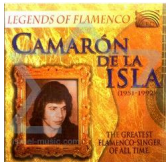


Camaron de la Isla - Legends Of Flamenco (1999)

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1-No Siento En El Mundo Mas-2:53 2-Como Tengo Voz Sonora-2:28 3-Que Murmuraitos Somos-2:32 4-Los Siete Sabios de Grecia-3:05 5-Granainas-4:31 6-Vamos a Cantarle La Nana-2:26 7-El Dia Que Me Eches de Menos-5:44 8-Esta Gitana Merese-2:29 9-Yo Senti Un Lenador-2:43 10-Fandangos-3:14

Jose Monge, known as Camaron de la Isla (the Shrimp of the Island), had a natural gift. He could make his voice sound stressed and distressed without shredding his vocal cords. This talent gave him the physical basis for singing the heartbreak and outrage that is flamenco. This voice is, of course, the first thing you notice on this disc. The second thing is the poor recording. It's strange, because the performances don't sound amateurish, but the sound does. The liner notes contain no information about the session, except that it dates from 1971, but the explanation is probably that the recording was made at a "juerga," or jam session that was recorded with a cheap tape recorder. These sessions are greatly prized for their spontaneity, rather like a bootleg of a Grateful Dead concert. Other than the singing, one cannot help but notice the fabulous guitar work of Antonio Arena, which is fast and furious on "Los Siete Sabios de Grecia" and cool and furious on the solo guitar piece "Granainas." The album's one drawback (other than the sound) is that it is only 32 minutes long. Still, it is an amazing document. --- Kurt Keefner, Rovi

Camaron de Isla's pieces on this CD are wonderful and passionate, especially if you appreciate the (what some call) "moorish" influence - the anguish and emotional languishing of the sung parts. Unfortunately, the album also showcases other flamenco artists (which would be fine, but it is presented as an album of Camaron's work) and the recording quality is horrific...as though someone whipped out a cassette recorder at an in-home session. I don't believe anything was

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done to salvage the quality (some digital post-processing) The saving grace of the CD is its passion, which I know I've said often in this review but it is almost palpable. I will check out other CD compilations and perhaps refer you to one of them. --- Rhesus Ortega, amazon.com

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