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Pot Pourri

A Luz (The Light) - Louis Simão

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Louis Simão

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Independent (simaomusic.com)

Review

On this fine debut recording, gifted Portuguese-Canadian multi-instrumentalist Louis Simão (accordion, bass, guitars, vocals and percussion) has not only presented a sumptuous collection of (primarily) original compositions steeped in Brazilian, Portuguese and North African musical traditions, but has also surrounded himself with a gifted group of collaborators. These include co-producer and percussionist/vocalist Luis (Luisito) Orbegoso, vocalists Patricia Cano and Jessica Lloyd with Wagner Petrilli on acoustic guitar, Michael Occhipinti on electric guitar, David French on saxophones, Rich Brown on electric bass, Bill McBirnie on flute, Marito Marques and Roger Travassos on drums and Maninho Costa on percussion.

At its heart, this song cycle is a profound meditation on the nature of duality, particularly brought into salience by the title track, inspired by the juxtaposition of the passing of Simão's father just previous to the birth of his daughter. Gems also include *Um*

Cantador (A Troubador) – which features splendid guitar work, lilting flute lines and Brazilian percussion motifs intersecting with the luscious vocals on this charming samba. Also, *Passaritos Fritos (Little Fried Birds)* has layered, vigourous accordion and string work and is a serious tip of the hat to the iconic Hermeto Pascoal, and also the unforgettable *Trés Anos (Three Years)* is rife with skilled string work accompanying Simão on this deeply moving ballad as he explores and transcends his profound grief at the loss of his father.

This recording is of such a high level of artistic, cultural and musical authenticity that it stands as a tribute to the talented Portuguese and Brazilian musicians who have enriched our country and our lives.

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