



CLARA SANABRAS - THE EMBLEM

2012

SMUDGED DISCS

HARVEY BROUGH: PRODUCER

*** THE EMBLEM - JANUARY 2012 - R2

Richly diverse and accomplished, *The Emblem* underlines Clara Sanabras's stylistic variety. This is not altogether surprising given that Sanabras has Sioux and Gypsy blood running through her veins, was born in France, raised in Barcelona and now resides in London. Consequently her songs, her arrangements, her clear, resonant voice, and the instruments she plays –including baroque and renaissance guitars, Indian harmonium, charango and Telecaster – combine to produce what can be best described as vibrantly exotic world-folk.

Lively and spirited throughout, Sanabras's tunes take in blues (the excellent 'Trace Of An Accent'), Asian sounds and Latin rhythms ('Tokyo Cherry Blossom') and two-step country and rockabilly ('Ode to Jimmy Jo') while her lyrics touch on topical issues – the post banking-crisis state of the world on 'Truth be told', racism on 'Trace of an Accent' and a woman's place in the world on 'Woman, Girl, Juxtaposed'.

So plenty here, then, to occupy and interest, highlights and surprises are everywhere and for a taste of what lies within, check out the atmospheric 'Dovetailing Love', and the folksy 'The Owls' on which Sanabras is joined to good effect by Rosemary Standley (of French band, Moriarty).

**** THE EMBLEM - FEBRUARY 2012 - 17SECONDS

Clara Sanabras is one of those artists who is quite an interesting proposition when encountered on paper, before even a note has been heard of her music. She has Sioux and Gypsy blood, was born in France, raised in Spain and now calls herself a Londoner. Amongst the instruments she plays on this album are baroque guitar, telecaster and Indian harmonium. To describe her as folk or world (shudder) music would be a case of very lazy categorisation, because there's a whole heap of influences from across Europe and indeed further afield that come into play on this album. Perhaps close comparisons would be Maddy Prior and Joanna Newsom; she has the respect of folk traditions and purity of voice of the former, whilst the visionary approach of the latter.

There's a number of great tracks on this album that can't but help win you around, 'Dovetailing Love' 'Ode To Jimmy Jo and the title track, to name but three. There's a number of artists who get lumped in with the 'world' music lot who seem to produce music that's very worthy and utterly dull, and usually leaves people rather afraid to admit that they don't like, or don't get it. Don't fall into the trap of assuming that Ms. Sanabras is of that ilk. This is something different, something special -and unlikely to soundtrack a dinner party near you any time soon.