

DORADO + AMATI SCHMITT GROUP

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STUCD 14152



Dorado Schmitt was born in 1957 in a wagon in St. Avold, France. He was christened Patrick because according to French law, all inhabitants had to register a Christian name. He took his last name in order to avoid the age-old persecution of the Romas. The name Schmitt gave him a chance of anonymity. But his name was still Dorado - despite the Catholic Pater's christening. Music was an integrated part of family life and life in general in le Camp Gitan, where Dorado grew up. Many made their living through the long and proud musical tradition in direct lineage from Django Reinhardt and Quintette du Hot Club de France. As soon as his fingers could span the frets, his father taught him his first chords on the guitar, and he delved into his family's music. His foremost schooling was on the guitar, and the results were soon apparent. By the time he was a teenager, he was already a professional musician. He not only played guitar, he also learned the violin in the proud Sinti tradition based on Django's tunes. The boy had talent, and soon he was gigging with his family - although it pained his father, when for a spell he turned to the decadent rock music of the day as represented by Carlos Santana, Jimi Hendrix and The Rolling Stones. Fortunately, the fallen young man turned round, and inspired by his father and Django's tunes, in 1978 he formed The Dorado Trio with Gino Reinhardt on bass. He began composing technically challenging pieces with room for improvisation, and mixed the old musette tunes with bossa nova, flamenco and jazz. In 1981 and 1983 Dorado recorded two LP's, HOMMAGE A LA ROMENES and NOTRE HISTOIRE, which both topped the German hit lists. But fate changed. In 1988 Dorado was severely injured in a car accident. He was in a coma for 11 days and suffered many broken bones and operations, and a rehabilitation that demanded great will power. The Dorado Trio reunited in 1990.

They recorded GYPSY REUNION in 1993 and PARISIENNE in 1994, two of the pillars of modern so-called "gypsy jazz". Since then, stages all over the world have been part of Dorado's regular tour schedule: Birdland in New York, Jazz a Vienna, Kennedy Center, and not least - JazzCup in Copenhagen, one of his favorite venues and chosen for the live recordings that make up this release. Dorado beams with pride when presenting his son Amati. Amati has followed his father's path. He too began playing guitar and violin when a small child. And he too developed swiftly. At 20, he is no less than a future world star, an exceptionally gifted and virtuosic musician. He plays with equal authority, ease and musicality whether performing Django's tunes or his and father's original material. They are joined by their regular French rhythm section - one of the hottest swinging in gypsy jazz - Francko Mehrstein on rhythm guitar and Xavier Nikq on bass. Esben Mylle Strandvig produced the album and joins in on a few tunes on rhythm guitar. He is extremely knowledgeable on the particular jazz form invented and developed by the European Romas.

He first heard Dorado and Amati at a party in the Sinti camp in Rijswijk. "...the party was wild, and late that night more guests arrived. Father and son joined the jam session. The boy was only 14 and he played so well it brought tears to your eyes. His father accompanied him, and we - and every one else - stood there gaping." Since then, Esben has organized many concerts with the group, and on their sixth trip to Denmark in connection with the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, they played and recorded two concerts at JazzCup. The best from these concerts has been culled for this release. It is all in the grand tradition: no playback, no overdubs - no cheating. Everything is just as it was. Period. It will take your breath away!

Dorado Schmitt (violin, g), Amati Schmitt (g), Francko Mehrstein (g), Xavier Nikq (b) + Esben Mylle Strandvig (rhythm g).

Before You Go / Si tu Savais / Ballade Amati / Djangos Tiger / Troublant bolero / Nuages / Tendresse / Shine / Sinti Rapsodie / Djangology / What Is this Thing Called Love.

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