

salsa party album with a political heart and a socially conscious soul, themed around the ‘cannibalism’, in which society systematically strips us of our individuality and finer feelings. Or something like that.

The title-track is a full-tilt Latino heavy metal blast. ‘Herida Abierta O Cicatriz’ is more nuanced but not far behind in its pell-mell energy and ‘Pena’ is a twanging salsa-rock call to the barricades, of which Joe Strummer and The Clash might have been proud. It all contributes to one of those relentlessly banging records that makes you suspect they’re best heard live – and yes, that is intended as a heavy hint to this year’s WOMAD programmers.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

TRACK TO TRY *Despiadado Corazón*

Ferd Music Without Borders

Grappa (55 mins)

★★★★★

Reckon you’ve Ferd it all before? Think again



It’s been nearly 20 years since the release of the groundbreaking album *From*

Senegal to Setesdal,

the outstanding and legendary Norwegian folk singer Kirsten Bråten Berg’s collaboration with West African musicians. Now the traditions of Setesdal, at the heart of Norwegian folk music, reach out once again, this time to 18 different countries. Berg’s fellow project leaders here, Sigurd Brokke, Gunnar Stubseid and Hallvard T Bjørgum, have been key figures in Norwegian folk music performance and study for many years, and there are over 50 musicians listed, plus all the sound engineers who assisted at locations all over the world.

The lullabies, ballads, dance tunes and love songs of Norway receive engaging responses from the Irish Traveller tradition, Indian *raga*, the throat singing of Mongolia and Indonesian *gamelan*, and instrumentation varies from Iranian *qanun* (zither) to delicate Chinese flute. It’s a journey that reveals just how much the musicians have listened to each other and taken to heart the spirit of shared creativity. The languages of the world interact and combine in a celebration of heartfelt music, while reminding us of the deep-seated strength and humanity of Norwegian folk.

FIONA TALKINGTON

TRACK TO TRY *Bånsullar*

The Gloaming Live at the NCH

Real World Records (64 mins)

★★★★★

Bringing a twilight mist to Dublin’s NCH



Dublin’s National Concert Hall has become a home from home for The Gloaming – they spent seven nights

there in March 2018, and fiddler Martin Hayes is its artist in residence. This superb live set, produced by pianist Thomas Bartlett, draws from performances across two years. Herein are stellar adventures in contemporary Irish traditional music, informed by the spirits of minimalism and contemporary classical, transforming tunes like ‘The Sailor’s Bonnet’ into huge, enthralling musical conversations – the version here clocks in at over 13 minutes while the closing ‘Fáinleog’ is just shy of 20. And the miracle is there is not an ounce of fat there, no extravagance, no decadence, but all the joy and excitement of unbotting great new music from these aged tunes, on a nightly basis, shared between five master musicians.

We first hear Iarla Ó Lionáird’s voice on the ten-minute ‘Cucanandy’, his style of delicate precision caught beautifully here and throughout the six-song set. Hayes and Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh’s fiddle, Hardanger fiddle and *viola d’amore* work wonders between them, while Bartlett’s piano conveys a drama of expression and Dennis Cahill’s guitar holds a tight measure. This live set is an hour-plus of pure pleasure: perhaps The Gloaming’s best album to date.

TIM CUMMING

TRACK TO TRY *The Sailors Bonnet*

The London Lucumi Choir Moyuba Baba, Moyuba Yeye

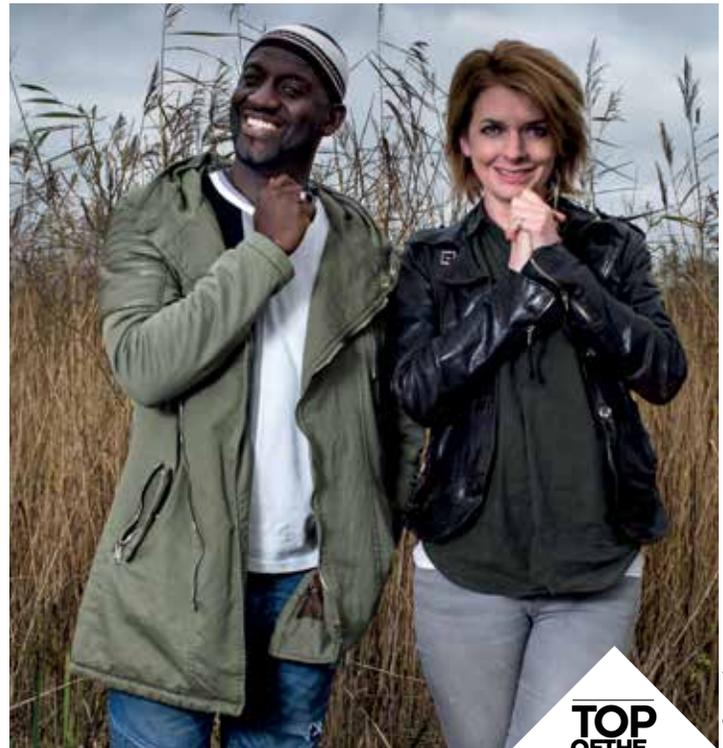
Movimientos (48 mins)

★★★★★

Diasporic African voices, together in the capital



Now 12 years old, the London Lucumi Choir continues to do extraordinary community-centred arts work and celebrates the rich, syncretistic cultures of the African diaspora, while producing powerfully unifying roots music. Subtitled *Praise Songs for Oshun & Obtala* in reference to two key Yoruba deities – forces of



Andy Morgan

TOP
OF THE
WORLD
TRACK 3

Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita SOAR

bendigeidig (45 mins)

★★★★★

Let us osprey



Here, at last, is the long-awaited new album from that remarkable duo, the classically

trained Welsh harpist Catrin Finch and *griot* and *kora* player Seckou Keita. They explore the links between Wales and Senegal in their music and, five years on from *Clychau Dibon* (their gently elegant debut), *SOAR* celebrates another such connection. That magnificent bird, the osprey, spends the winter in West Africa but has begun breeding in mid Wales for the first time since the early 17th century. The first Welsh-born osprey in recent years to have travelled to Africa and returned to breed in the

UK was christened Clarach, which gives the opening track its name, a gently drifting, tranquil piece that builds into a soaring duet. Then they begin to demonstrate their range. ‘Bach to Baïssó’ includes an excerpt from the *Goldberg Variations* – surely never played on the *kora* before – along with an ancient Senegambian tune. ‘1677’ is a brooding, atmospheric piece inspired by memories of French rule in Africa, while ‘Cofiwch Dryweryn’ is another lament, for a Welsh valley flooded to create a reservoir. It’s an exquisite album. Even the liner notes, by Andy Morgan, are intriguing, being written from the viewpoint of Clarach the osprey.

ROBIN DENSELOW

TRACK TO TRY *Bach to Baïssó*

vital energy for many people across West Africa, Cuba, Brazil and beyond – this ten-track CD takes listeners on a journey along lost London rivers that ultimately find their source deep in the ancient Kongo kingdom.

Percussion, integral to the ensemble, is a prompt and rhythmic peg for vaulting solos and choral harmonies that rain down like spring showers. Call-and-response features

in all the arrangements; this is song as conversation, as shared emotion. The final track explores three separate *orisha* traditions, the choir skilfully guided by Candomblé initiate Ricardo Axé and a remix giving the sign-off an urban, contemporary treatment. London is indeed lucky to have this musical powerhouse in its ‘burbs.

CHRIS MOSS

TRACK TO TRY *Oshun Iyesa* ▶