

ROSEAUX

Album: ROSEAUX II

1/Kaat (feat Blick Bassy):

After the flute intro from Brazilian flautist Claudio “Cacau” Queiroz, a longstanding member of Michel Legrand’s orchestra, the voice of Cameroonian singer Blick Bassy’s pulls us into a poem infused with nostalgia, sung in his mother tongue, bassa. The wind instrument becomes an island bird and seems to want to start a conversation with this melancholy voice, as if to fill it with joy and hope. It even ends up drawing it into the sway of an end-of-summer samba.

2/Island (feat Ben l’Oncle Soul):

This is the record’s “don’t worry, be happy” moment. A timeless atmosphere with instrumentation that fills out gradually, a string of notes played on the piano is soon joined by a cello, and ending up with the brass section of a marching band. In this swing ambiance, Ben L’Oncle Soul is as happy as a fish in water, at ease with the music and the lyrics created by the trio - who collaborated with the Canadian singer-songwriter on texts for several songs on the album.

3/ I Should Have Known (feat Anna Majidson):

French by birth and Quebecois by adoption, Anna Majidson is one half of the Haute duo. The inflexions of her voice are decidedly of her generation, that of indie rock and R’n’B. Transposed to a setting of classical chords, the effect is stupefying, as if two seemingly irreconcilable eras are finally united.

4/ Heart & Soul (feat Olle Nyman)

Written by Olle Nyman about twelve years ago, this is one of Emile’s favourite songs, which was played regularly on Radio Nova. Here it has been rerecorded for Roseaux by the same singer, but in a different context, plainer, allowing the upstrokes and downstrokes, the moments of calm and moments of discomfort that inhabit the same emotion to emerge.

5/ You Can Discover (feat Melissa Laveaux):

The whole philosophy of Roseaux is perhaps encapsulated in the sense of transference which this John Martyn cover illustrates beautifully. Knowing how to draw a John Holt rocksteady track (*Strange Things*) towards Chico Buarque’s Brazil, as they did on the first album, or how a ballad from John Martyn, figurehead of the UK’s progressive folk scene, loses all its astringency, giving way to the captivating languor of Bessie Smith style honky tonk blues when it’s given to Melissa Laveaux.

6/Daily Bread (feat Aloe Blacc):

For this track, first recorded by Aloe Blacc and Roseaux ten years ago, the American singer has made the Our Father, the most famous prayer in the Christian world, his own. From the original version, only the vocal remains; the instrumentation has been reworked by the group for the new album.

7/Mè Ni Wè (feat Blick Bassy):

There's a shift in tone as we climb aboard this modal "Blue Train" in pure John Coltrane style. Blick Bassy wanted to sing in his mother tongue, bassa, for this jazziest trip, during which he moves from a "cool" vocal register to a singing style that's completely "free".

8/ I'm Going Home (feat Ben L'Oncle Soul):

Ultra-classical, both in its construction and in its lyrics, very reminiscent of Jacques Brel, this slow ballad on which Ben L'Oncle Soul shifts tone, moving into "bonjour tristesse" mode, culminates in a quasi-baroque climax with "*Willie Colon style*" trombone that literally explodes.

9/ Libàk (feat Blick Bassy):

An approach that could be reminiscent of a song from a musical by Gershwin (Porgy & Bess) or Leonard Bernstein (West Side Story), with the Apostroph' choir, directed by France de La Hameinaye, this is the heart of the show, a truly monumental moment, made all the more precious as Blick Bassy's flow, until then soft and melodious, becomes torrential and angry.

10/ Waves of Sorrow (feat Olle Nyman):

Proof that paring back a song to its bones can create a fruitful space as long as the melody is strong and the singer up to the challenge. With its hybrid, piano-synth accompaniment, this is a moment apart on the album, made even more exceptional by vocals from the Swedish singer Olle Nyman, a sort of Viking Tim Buckley and the real revelation of this top class cast of singers, making this wave of sorrow more of a caress than a drowning.