

THOMAS DUTRONC: SKETCH for a BIO...

Hello. Do you know what? No one is perfect. THOMAS DUTRONC, who is a musician, is well aware of this, only cutting his first album at 34 years old.

We know what artists' biographies are like. The more they smack of misery and destitution, the better they go down. But with Thomas, this will not work. He does not study the stars or smoke big cigars but his secret, his personal secret is immediately apparent. A firm, aristocratic hand, mischievous blue eyes, nothing to write home about.....but nothing to whinge about either.

So we already know this about him. And, more vaguely, that he has something to do with the music scene or hangs out on its edges. Mistake! There is nothing vague about it and he is definitely not on the edges: he is clearly and unmistakably in the middle but on a path running crosswise to the usual routes. One way or another, Thomas managed to dodge taking music seriously up till about 17 years old but then, at 18, with his baccalaureat diploma in his pocket and an art degree already underway, he suddenly found himself deluged by the mood of music. Not the sort of pop or rock sounds blown in on the west wind - this was not for him. He reached further afield, eastwards, and took the time he needed: gypsy caravans and wild encampments smoking to the rhythm of gypsy jazz! A real conversion, with its accompanying long, humble and patient initiation...

So in just a few years of total immersion, Thomas was only living his life by gaily maltreating his miserable ten fingers (except for one that remains obstinately pointed skywards, without doubt to emphasize his contradictory spirit) on cascades of burning notes that had spilled out before on a pale planet rigid with amazement by a Django Reinhardt as nonchalant as he was unapproachable. We are talking about asceticism in a world formatted immediately with vacuum sold by the pound in advertising! But Thomas does not care. Both prey and stimulus to his passion, he carries on along his path, earning his kudos and the respect of his rough peers (such as Bireli Lagrene, who is to Django what Stevie Ray Vaughan is to Jimi Hendrix, sorry for the comparison) along a meandering itinerary flanked by apache bistros and frequent detours and where cock fights are settled by a flurry of frenzied guitars...

And when Thomas is not chewing the fat or singing along with his gypsy friends, he is piecing together songs with his childhood buddies, because he needs to do that too... And little by little, the experiences acquired and the inspiration of chance encounters combine to produce a show patched together with the scattered stuff of dreams, extravagant sketches, bits of incandescent string and above all, yes, above all, of brotherly creativity: "THOMAS DUTRONC and the GYPSY SPIRITS".

In the beginning, the disc did not even exist as a secret project: it was just that the time came when the people concerned had to hear the pieces he was working on.... And from piece to piece, time passed, time filled with 75 increasingly torrid performances over two years, performances that were no more than sample swatches and extracts, finally solidified into the disc we have here and that does not resemble anything in popular music ever heard or identified before on these shores: an incredibly dense cameo of bubbling instrumentals and airy-dreamy songs falling from the sky with the grace of an acrobat, in absolute homage to ardent imagination, the gentle lunacy of an artist with the deceptive air of a well-behaved young man but with that flashing mega charisma and charm: THOMAS DUTRONC.