

## Delphine Dora « Blablaba » (Abaton Book Company - 2006)

### **Review on Foxy Digitalis**

Delphine Dora is an artist from Belgium who mostly carves out songs through the medium of improvisation .. by herself, on the piano, or with friends such as the band Half Asleep with whom she has recorded a collaboration which will be out in early 2007 on Greed Recordings. This CDR features 19 untitled short vignettes ranging from 45 seconds to 2:30 minutes. It is a very special recording for Delphine as it allows her to display some of the "freest" aspects of her work. Actually, it is impossible not to experience this music as an uninterrupted flow of sound: be it the voice .. fragile, slightly out of tune, always on the edge .., the piano or the (low-fi) recording noise, each of these elements are part of the same fabric. Consequently, Delphine's improvisations have a slightly baroque feel to them that has already drawn comparisons to the works of Marianne Nowotny and Lau Nau. Yet, what strikes one first and foremost is the very strong presence that can be felt throughout this recording. It manifests itself in many different ways. For example, the melodic lines are so carefully intertwined that they're able to produce layers of complex emotional strains which gradually pull the listener in. We are thus invited to fill in the blanks... Vivid images may come out of this. As we listen on, one can almost hear echoes of old forgotten tunes. Yet, the music remains particularly elusive. This is also reflected in Delphine's piano playing and singing which often oscillate between pure wordless vocalizations and a series of ambiguous mumbles that sound like they belong to an existing language. Below the surface, there are these ghostlike melodies which now seem to rejoice to have finally been given a voice .. even if that cannot be really put into words... "blablaba". For the listener, this also means that it may be difficult .. at times .. to isolate a specific emotional colour, but it is exactly what makes this record so very special. People who are into the music of Josephine Foster, Islaja or Mary Margaret O'Hara should definitely check this one out. Simply beautiful..

8/10 (François Hubert)

## Delphine Dora & The Unexpected « We're all of this » (Greed Recordings – 2007)

### **Gatecho**

Hailing from Belgium, Delphine Dora's music gives you a special feeling of something different. This vocalist with much dreamy singing and the talented piano player is now presenting her new release, Delphine Dora and the Unexpected - We're All Of This that is coming May 12th on Greed Recordings. She has collaborated with artists like Valérie Leclercq from Half Asleep and Jullian Angel on the recording. Around the piano and the interweaving playfulness of feminine and masculine voices, be they whispered, chanted, shouted, spoken or actually sung, you can also hear traditional instruments, music box, glockenspiel or dry guitars. Very psychedelic and otherworldly.

### **Bricolage Fantasy Blog / Squashed**

Delphine Dora's full album release! Okay, you all know her right? She is the editor of Songs to the Sirens blog, Bricolage Fantasy's big sister. She released "We're All This" last spring along with assortment of activities (mostly mysterious and mystical) The album itself is in psych-folks form, full of otherworldly sounds. Just like earlier EP releases, it is a sound landscape, full of personal stream of consciousness piano playing. Odd modes, quotations

from religious pieces, 60's lost albums, experimental ambients, recent slowcore (Charalambides, Fursaxa) and melodies! Delphine can play strings of sweet melody out of nowhere endlessly. (Just don't make her cranky tho'. You don't want to hear what comes out of her piano then. :D) This is a highly personal album, full of unexpected mode and rhythm. Mostly in short pieces instead of standard 3 minute song form. I like the middle part when Delphines is quoting all sort of early modern composers (Debussy and Chopin). Breath is particularly lovely and delicate. Sexy People is definitely a standard ambient piece (I have to make a list out of that song) The album ends with several post-rock pieces. Overall, you have to see the album like an unfolding script. Story told gently by somebody who just travels the distance of sound exploration in folks. A psychedelic journey. (either that Delphine is doing her post grad music thesis on your head) Some sections are familiars, warm and lovely, others are with unexpected rhythms and dictions. What's the story with her and Valérie ? ...

### **Dora'li « Saeglin » (Young Girl Records – 2007)**

#### **Heathen Harvest**

Usually I reserve information concerning the logistics surrounding a release for later in the review, but this one is different. Fortunately, this is available as a download because there are only 49 copies in circulation in a lovely hand-sewn printed cloth pouch. Also fortunate is that the information regarding this disk is available online because the printed pouch is virtually impossible to read. What is unfortunate is that I lack the ability (or perhaps the knowledge?) to properly translate the disk's and many of its track's titles accurately, so my apologies in advance to the artists and sensitive readers.

The music is performed by the duo of Delphine Dora and Auerelie (ex-Gina Artworth) using piano (sometimes four-hands), voice and various percussives recorded in 2007. Although it's purported that the disk is improvised there's an undeniable sense of classical training in the mix as well. A liberal sense of playfulness and atonality become apparent immediately in the disturbingly attractive first two tracks. The third piece is something like Satie and Weill meeting for spiked tea on a particularly sunny afternoon in Portugal. We're talking vignettes here (twenty tracks in forty-plus minutes), song-structures and not thoroughly developed compositions. The voice work is especially striking, evoking both Cathy Berberian and Catherine Jauniaux in their avant-garde best moments, yet still able to return to a tonal center when appropriate.

The piano work comes across as something like Debussy channeled through Irene Schweizer in a psychedelic cabaret. Several tracks have a child-like quality that I find to be a signifier of a mature artist with all faculties in tact, while others are seem more focused and honestly sensual. The last number even employs a Gamelan tuning (or at least a close cousin). Keep in mind that there's a language barrier in effect here, although I suspect that they are not only speaking French (ahem).

Dora'li have succeeded in creating an entirely new music here and I have no idea how to classify it...nor do I care to do so. There's the tension and release, a bit of sturm und drang and a shitload of good-natured fun free play. It gets better as it progresses and ultimately comes across as one big suite rather than a collection of 18 individual works. Regardless of how you assess it, this is an absolutely great recording. This is the sort of thing I've always wanted to hear but never knew existed. Bully for me...can't wait to hear more. A+

### **Delphine Dora « On The Other Side » (Free Music Archive – 2010)**

Delphine's last album is full of tender piano lines, (sometimes) treated vocals, in good meaning lo-fi approach to the production, thru the whole 31 min. of play length there's a strong live/gig sence. Marvellous and sure enviable feel of the moment! Pure neo-folk, soft and gentle. And yeah, Sister Never Except the Name and If I Capture It It Would Be Gone are beautiful!..

Delphine's last album was recorded 4 days ago, released 2 days ago and it pushes up the idea of musician's self-sufficiency at today's web. Artists are haunted with different services for self-promotion, just look around and pick up the one you'll like. And still straying among all bandcamps and soundclouds, which are absolutely cool as a sort of firing pad, an audience needs the thematic aggregators and here we have FMA and that's a huge facilities for all of you people...

PS For more improvised/avant stuff listeners there's a great dora'li collaboration !