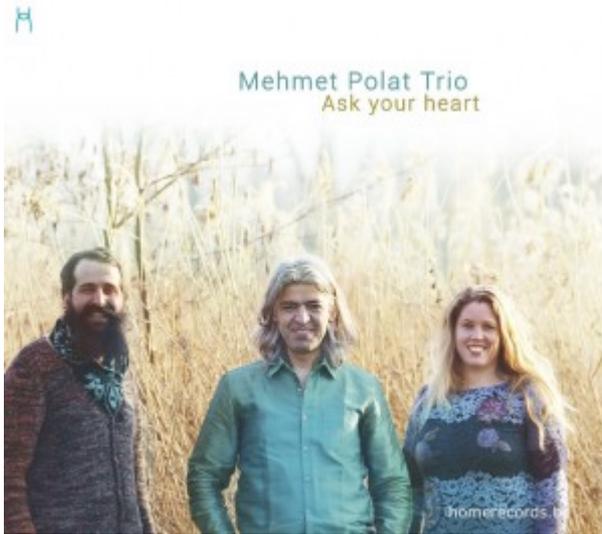


CD Review: Mehmet Polat Trio 2nd Album "Ask Your Heart"

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Artist: Mehmet Polat Trio

Title: Ask Your Heart

Label: Homerecords

Genre: world/maqam/kora music

CD Review by Dawoud Kringle

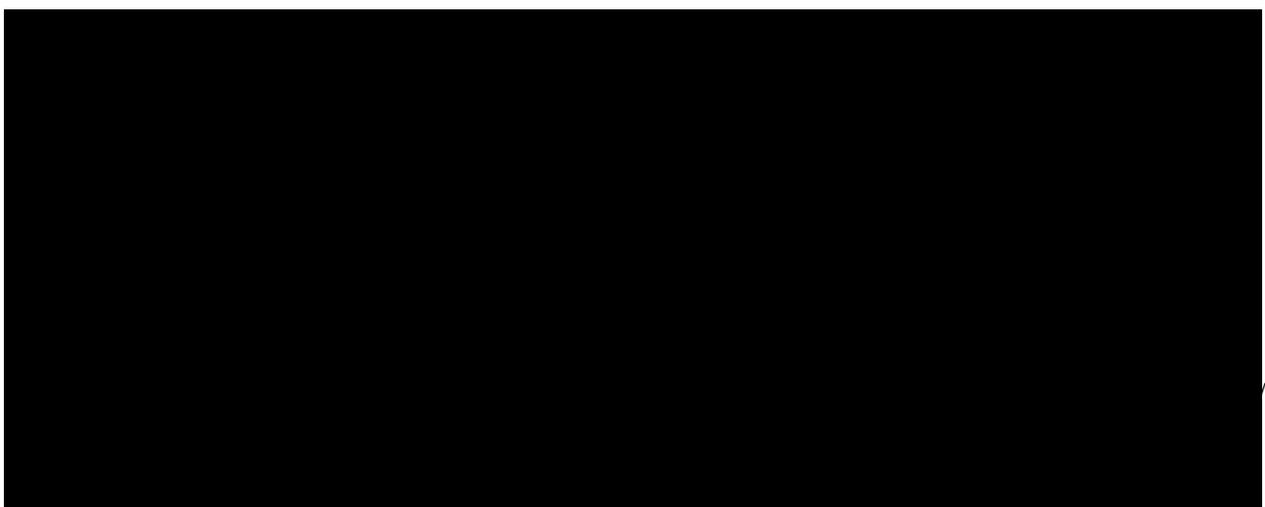
On this album you will hear the best selection of my previously unreleased compositions and artistic ideas! I've been looking forward to recording these for a long time. My colleagues and I played on this album with full passion and sensibility. – Mehmet Polat



Amsterdam based Turkish oud master and vocalist [Mehmet Polat](#) and his colleagues ney master **Sinan Arat** and kora and n'gomi master **Dymphi Peters** (who replaced kora master **Zoumana Diarra**) have produced and released a new work. **Ask Your Heart** extends the Mehmet Polat Trio's tradition of musical transculturalism.

The opening track, "**Untouched Stories**," surrounds the listener with an almost minimalist

hypnotic undertow. This moves into an implied harmonic structure that continues the idea begun in the intro. Arat's ney offers a vocal-like maqam based melody that weaves into the dense tapestry of the song's framework. Polat's solo offers another perspective on the maqam. Some of his melodies produce startling movements outside the mood of the piece, yet all make sense in the bigger picture. He brings it to an unexpected yet harmonious conclusion.





“**Dance It Out**” seems to emerge from the previous track (if one were not paying attention, one might think it was part of “**Untouched Stories.**” The relentless ostinato of the oud and the kora propel the rhythm while the ney glides above it, riding its momentum. **Peters** offers a kora solo that solidifies her place in the trio. The song takes an aggressive and almost self-destructive turn before setting itself up to segue into the next track, “**Sandcastles.**” This piece takes the aggressiveness of “**Dance It Out**” and invokes within it an unmistakable sadness; no doubt lamenting the ephemeral and transitory nature of all things, like sandcastles slipping into the sea.

The entire CD explores the territories and potentials of itself in considerable detail. Each track seems like an integral part of the whole collection. One could listen to as one walks through a garden; one will find a variety of flowers, trees, and rock formations, each different and complete in itself. But they’re all part of the same garden. Occasionally, something stands out, such as the crystalline sense of feminine energy in “**Serenity**” or the percussive appearance of “**Mardin**” with **Polat** on vocals.

The Balkan, Middle Eastern, African, and Modal Jazz influences and essence of the Mehmet Polat Trio’s music is explored here with a sense of detailed urgency. It is more concerned with revealing its own emotional content at the expense of technique (not to say there’s anything sloppy here: the music is executed with amazing proficiency). It is as if the emotional and visceral possibilities envisioned in each piece, and the collection as a whole, are cultivated with the care of the aforementioned flowers in the garden, yet at the same time, with seriousness and intensity. The result is an engaging, enveloping, and at times, almost painful beauty.