

Turkish *oud* player Mehmet Polat further develops his style on this solo album with the help of others on traditional Turkish instruments, drums, clarinet, double bass and percussion. All of the 12 original compositions showcase Polat's prodigious talents on his instrument, as well as his improvisatory skills; blending elements of Turkish and Kurdish music with jazz rhythms and sensibilities. The opening track, 'Firefighters', certainly creates the atmosphere of an inferno with its intense jazz-fusion-style drumming and complex rhythmic patterns, which contrasts with the airier tones of 'Footprints' in which Sinan Arat's *ney* (flute) soars plaintively above the oud and frame drum. There is great variety in influence here too; in addition to the sounds of Polat's homeland we hear flamenco *palmas* (hand claps), rhythms emanating from West Africa and a good deal of rock aesthetics as well.

There are moments for all the guest musicians to shine, such as Elnur Mikayilov's expert-level *kamanचा* (spike fiddle) solo on 'Permission' and Shwan Suleiman's powerful vocals on 'Being the Voice.' The engine of this vehicle, however, is Polat's endlessly expressive and groovy style that carries his compositions from conception to execution.



The Promise