



**Lily Dahab**

***Huellas***

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Lily Dahab *Huellas* (Eng.: traces, pronounced: hueshas)

**Tango and folklore, delicate poetic songcraft and full-on Argentinean rock – these are the widely diverging musical poles between which the many-faceted sound of Argentina unfolds. All of these sounds have left their traces in Lily Dahab’s colourful resume. On her new album *Huellas*, the Berlin-based vocal nomad, accompanied by her four-piece backing band, finds her way back to her homeland, uncovering her own personal and moving history of Argentina – all delivered with an exceptional voice that the *Badische Zeitung* newspaper described as “radiant honey”.**

Her cosmopolitan journey through life is the stuff of a travel novel: she grew up in Buenos Aires where she studied music, recorded a bolero album and set off on her musical carrier. After playing the leading role in ‘Cats’, Lily moved to Spain. In the nine years she spent there, she took on many further leading roles, among others as the gypsy Esmeralda in the contemporary stage musical version of Victor Hugo’s ‘Hunchback of Notre Dame’ in Barcelona – the same role played by the Israeli singer Noa in Paris.

At this point, the lady with the enchanting voice and the captivating natural beauty goes through another paradigm shift. It was love as well as the vibrant creative music scene that drew her to Berlin. This is where she met the pianist Bene Aperdannier (Michael Schiefel, Jocelyn B.Smith, Jessica Gall), a musical partner and arranger with a keen eye for detail capable of setting her voice to delicate, subtle accompaniments. With the help of Bene and his quartet her debut album *nómade* was finished in 2010 and was soon afterwards nominated for the ‘German Record Critics’ Award’. Drawing upon her wealth of boleros and tangos, Spanish songwriting and Brazilian bossanova, the album’s repertoire displayed a very personal touch, combining a jazzy crispness with languorous melancholy, fiery drama with passionate exuberance. “Bursting with charismatic radiance“ (*Hessische Allgemeine*), “A voice like a kiss!“ (*Badische Neueste Nachrichten*), “Intelligent, melodious and sure of itself“ (*Jazzthing*), “Tempestuous!“ (*Rhein-Lahn-Zeitung*) – these are a few samples of the praise heaped upon the album and the countless concerts accompanying it, some of which included her first appearances at big European jazz festivals.

Lily Dahab has no problem convincing the audience with her inimitable vocal artistry: Effortless intonation combined with crystal-clear, transparent expression, ranging from gentle melancholia to enchanting fire, from arabesque rambling to delicate intimacy, sometimes all within the space of a few bars. Together with her dream team, Lily Dahab has now delivered a second musical chapter from her new home in Berlin. ‘Huellas’ means ‘traces’ – and it is these traces, genetic as well as emotional and musical, that Lily Dahab is now steadfastly following in the direction of her homeland. “When you choose or write a song, you touch something in yourself that has been waiting to be released, a sleeping volcano that is brought to life in the form of music”, she says. Lily has chosen an astounding collection of songs, all of which have a strong connection to her life: “Whether folklore or tango – as different as the

styles may be, they are all part of Argentina's musical heritage. Every one of these writers has left his trace on my soul. I was singing their songs as a young girl, they were the soundtrack to my youth. And now I approach the songs in a more mature way".

*Huellas* radiates a subtle and multi-layered spectrum of Argentinean musical colour, including some folk tunes from the Litoral region in north-east Argentina. The dreamy 'Peces de Luz' comes wrapped in a jazzy song arrangement, 'Zamba de usted' features a somnambulist, swinging vocal set against a traditional rhythm – including edgy guitar solos played by the prestigious special guest Quique Sinesi, the country's most renowned string wizard. Lily and her team tango their way through two Piazzolla compositions, decorated with bandoneón flourishes courtesy of Walther Castro. Then comes 'Vuelvo al Sur', an affecting nostalgic reflection upon Lily's hometown on the Rio de la Plata river. In 'Yo soy Maria', Piazzolla depicts Buenos Aires as a sensual, enticing and bewitching woman.

This gives way to a selection of Argentinean song-writing gems which Lily's creative imagination has transformed into her very own. Her pianist, Bene Aperdannier, has given the arrangements a range of accents from impressionistic reserve to rousing impetus. The contributions of guitarist Quique Sinesi (who plays together with Walther Castro in the Grammy-winning trio led by Pablo Ziegler, Piazzolla's pianist of many years), bassist Andreas Henze and Lily's fellow countryman Topo Gioia interweave lyrically, with pluck and to great effect without losing their original touch. The title track, written by Dahab/Aperdannier with lyrics by Lily's friend and internationally-renowned lyricist Claudia Brant, starts off in a melancholy mood before ascending hymn-like into the heavens. It was inspired by the film 'Oranges and Sunshine', telling the heart-rending story of more than 130,000 British children who were transported to far-away Commonwealth countries under the lure of false pretences. 'Detras del Muro de los lamentos', written by the Argentine rock musician Fito Paez, has been set in a new arrangement and given a grandiose, entirely unexpected Arabic touch by oud player Nuri Karademirli who, like Lily's grandfather, was born in Izmir – an homage to Lily's ancestors.

In 'Como la cigarra', Lily pays a moving tribute to the metaphor-loving and daring poet Maria Elena Walsh. "M. E. Walsh most certainly left clear traces upon my youth; she mainly wrote children's songs but her lyrics often had a double meaning. She wrote 'Como la cigarra' in reaction to Mercedes Sosa being forbidden to sing one of her songs during the time of the military dictatorship. The second meaning here is: You will never silence me, 'like the cicadas.'" The album nears the end with 'Plegaria para un niño dormido' (originally by Luis A. Spinetta), which deals affectionately with the plight of street children whose dreams can never come true.

And last but not least, there are two further original compositions offering an insight into the creative chemistry between Lily Dahab and Bene Aperdannier: the sensitive ballad 'Para Mário' is both a dedication to a dead friend and a contemplation of Lily's new hometown Berlin with its long, dark winters that bring out the more reflective and sensual side of Lily's Latin nature. The (Brazilian) samba 'Deja que te hable el alma' provides an uplifting contrast bursting with hip-swaying radiance and layered with wonderfully breezy backing vocals.

***Huellas* is a moving tribute to a homeland left behind that will always be present in the soul - Lily Dahab has committed her entire passion, yearning, thoughtfulness and joy to its creation.**

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