

Pedro Soler & Gaspar Claus “Barlande”

infiné

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Artist Spotlight: Pedro Soler & Gaspar Claus (ft. Sufjan Stevens and Bryce Dessner)

Posted by [Joseph Sannicandro](#) on September 20th, 2011 at 2:22 PM
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Marion Lefebvre/Courtesy of the artist

This summer in Paris I was lucky to receive a generous invitation from the [InFiné](#) label to attend a small showcase by [Pedro Soler & Gaspar Claus](#). The label that specializes in “easy music for the hard to please” has released some phenomenal records in recent years, generally techno-inspired and featuring classically trained musicians. (Highlights include the debut by [Aufgang](#), featuring two grand pianos and house music beats, and [Arandel's In D](#), among many others.) One might be skeptical when first confronted with Soler & Gaspar, as “next generation flamenco” seems removed from InFiné’s regular MO. Put that skepticism aside and approach their music with an open mind, however, and you’ll be a convert. Seeing them perform, and improvise live, convinced me of the importance of their music, a form of communication that can only exist between father and son, across genres and expectation.

Barlande is a cohesive entity despite the variety of influences and cultures that went into its creation. Its 8 tracks straddle these divides, between instruments, between father and son, between cultures, interlocking and breaking apart, finding common ground and complementing one another. The tracks have a narrative quality, if an unconventional one, and are lovely in the background or, even better, for careful, contemplative listening. Live, the duo's improvisations take on a different role, perhaps more akin to the classical presentation of flamenco, as the performers commune in a (sometimes aggressive) musical conversation while the audience listens carefully, attuned to the wondrous simultaneity of the moment of creation and reception.

The Paris showcase, hosted at [Devialet](#), was also designed to showcase the company's high-end audio equipment. Soler & Claus's music is well suited for contemplative listening in such an environment, and both the live performance and the post-show playback demonstrate the rich colors that emerge in the dance between guitar and cello's sonorities. I suspect, like myself, most of our readers have little knowledge of flamenco, but *Barlande* transcends genre, and will endear itself to any listener who enjoys beautiful, innovative music. Another gem from InFiné.

(2008)



Take Away Show #94 _ Gaspar Claus & Pedro Soler (full version) from Vincent Moon / Petites Planètes on Vimeo.

Photos by Thomas Sauvage

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