



April 03, 2004

GIPSY KINGS

Roots

Producer(s): Craig Street

You cannot go wrong with the Gipsy Kings. Their superlative, near-telepathic musical interplay never fails to produce precise, driving rhythms and wrenchingly soulful balladry. Here, the group's principals, the Baliardo and Reyes families, regrouped in a villa in the south of France with producer Craig Street (Norah Jones, Cassandra Wilson) to record this collection. Surrounded by their native region and culture, the centuries-old but timeless essence of the Gipsy Kings' music is brought forth. The performances—unadorned save for percussionist Cyro Baptista, double bassist Greg Cohen and Garth Hudson on accordion—stand up with their finest work. There isn't a weak track on this 16-song set nor anything close to it. But the torrential opener, «Aven, Aven» and the beautiful meditation «Soledad» are among the finest this treasure has to offer.

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