

## Kala Jula Sangoyi

Buda Musique (55 mins)



*Malian-Swiss guitar extravaganza*



Kala Jula is a collaboration between multi-instrumentalists Samba Diabaté and Vincent Zanetti,

both of whom live in Mali, although the latter originally hails from Switzerland. The pair met while working in the ensemble of *djembe* thwacker Soungalo Coulibaly, their twinned guitars glowing at the music's heart. Both players mostly played acoustic, yet they occasionally picked up a soft-voiced electric. Diabaté originally played *balafon*, touring with the singer Sali Sidibé, but he eventually gravitated to guitar. This is a set of acoustic wonderment, an intimately recorded feast of strings, with Zanetti also providing some percussion and Diabaté sometimes switching to *ngoni* or bass. Trumpeter Yannick Barman guests on three cuts, and his powdery precision recalls the talkative modality of the Beirut brassman Ibrahim Maalouf. Sidikiba Coulibaly also contributes to a couple of tunes, singing and playing the *simbi*, a harp-like instrument from Guinea.

Guitar phrases are finely embellished, but once or twice, a tune skirts a little too close to a prettified blanding-out of its Malian source, especially in the choice of certain singer-songwriter chord progressions.

The duo maintain an intimate feel for most of the pieces, but import just the right amount of extra colours to periodically expand the palette.

MARTIN LONGLEY

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