

Manu Chao – Clandestino (1998)

Written by bluelover

Wednesday, 27 July 2011 18:20 - Last Updated Sunday, 22 November 2015 17:20

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|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 01. <i>Clandestino</i> | play | 02. <i>Desaparecido</i> | 03. <i>Bongo Bong</i> |
| | | 04. <i>Je Ne T'aime Plus</i> | 05. <i>Mentira</i> |
| | | 06. <i>Lagrimas De Oro</i> | 07. <i>Mama</i> |
| <i>Call</i> | play | 08. <i>Luna Y Sol</i> | 10. <i>Welcome To</i> |
| <i>Tijuana</i> | | 11. <i>Dia Luna... Dia Pena</i> | 12. |
| <i>Malegria</i> | | 13. <i>La Vie A 2</i> | 14. |
| <i>Minha Galera</i> | | 15. <i>La Despedida</i> | |
| 16. <i>El Vento</i> | | Anouk - Vocals | Jef Cahours - Trombone |
| Antoine Chao - Trumpet | Manu Chao - Drums, Vocals | Angelo Mancini - Trumpet | Awa Touty Wade - Vocals |

As one of the driving forces in the French-Spanish ethno-punk band Mano Negra, songwriter-guitarist Chao delivers a surprising solo endeavor. Centered around a simple editorial writing style and an acoustic guitar, this album chronicles his political and personal travels around the world, studying the foibles of life in Latin America and the Caribbean, through Africa and back to Europe. He quotes but never actually plays salsa, son, reggae, Latin pop, and African folk music, all to the service of his songs (written and sung in English, French, and Spanish). The backing is a deceptive hodgepodge of guest artists and collected sounds he has pasted together to service the simple songs he sings. There is a circuslike feel to the whole project, a childlike sense of wonder coupled with a cynical and sometimes sly glance at the "real world." This is a single piece of work, each song bleeding into the next without stopping, a train ride that slows at each station along the way but never stops. It has charm, wit, and depth--a rare and potent combination of virtues for a pop musician. --Louis Gibson

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The first solo album released by the former frontman of Mano Negra, Clandestino is an enchanting trip through Latin-flavored worldbeat rock, reliant on a potpourri of musical styles from traditional Latin and salsa to dub to rock & roll to French pop to experimental rock to techno. Chao's voice tends to be a bit nasally, but the best songs ("Mentira," "Mama Call," and the silly novelty "Bongo Bong") here benefit from his infectious, freewheeling delivery which incorporates balladry, chorus vocals, rapping, and tossed-off spoken-word passages. Just about every track has odd sampled bits from what sound like pirate radio-station broadcasts (a possible link to the title). There are so many great ideas on this record that it's difficult to digest in one listen, but multiple plays reveal the great depth of Manu Chao's artistry. ---John Bush Rovi

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