

## Duo Bottasso - The Folk Messengers

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**Duo Bottasso**

*Crescendo*

Artist release ([www.duobottasso.com](http://www.duobottasso.com))

**The Folk Messengers**

*All for One*

Artist release ([www.facebook.com/TheFolkMessengers](http://www.facebook.com/TheFolkMessengers))

Occitania has a rich musical tradition --many traditions in fact -- from the Aran Valley in the Pyrenees, almost as far east as Turin. In the Italian Occitan valleys, in Piedmont, that tradition often takes on a jazzy or brassy flavor --seen also in neo-traditional Piedmontese groups like La Lionetta -- that is exemplified in these two new recordings.

The Bottasso brothers, as Duo Bottasso, from the Occitan-speaking areas of Piedmont, recorded the lovely *Crescendo* at the Only Music Studio in Turin, the same place that brother Simone, diatonic accordion player, recorded *All for One* with The Folk Messengers. A contrast in styles, but there are similarities also. Both share the clear, crisp instrumental vision of Carlo Miori who recorded and mixed each album.



[HD] Duo Bottasso - Crescendo (Official Trailer)



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**Duo Bottasso's** *Crescendo* opens with a lovely violin-accordion duet between the brothers, Simone and Nicolò, "Cosa Faresti se non avessi Paura?" that has echoes of Celtic dances, Basque trikitixa and Italian sounds. In "Diatophonia N7" Simone's accordion and Niccolò's violin, again play together, at times sounding like a duet between, perhaps, a jauntier Kepa Junkera and a subdued Jean-Luc Ponty.

As an Elena Ledda fan, it was a pleasant surprise to hear her voice on the lovely "Reina," a traditional sounding tune featuring the uniquely talented Sardinian singer on a ballad credited to S. Bottasso and M.G. Ledda. Generally, though, this nine-track CD highlights the interplay between the accordion and the violin.

"Monkerina," again featuring the accordion and some very Ponty-esque moments from Nicolò, continues in the earlier vein. "Bourée" blends an Occitan rooted accordion

with a bit of experimental, and on this one Simone excels. Besides Ledda, the two brothers feature a number of guests such as sax players Jacopo Albini, and Filippo Ansaldi, and the eclectic Brazilian percussionist, Gilson Silvera on “Receita de Samba/Scottish Sfasà”, and a little fun intro and closer on “Magicialada”.

On *All For One*, **The Folk Messengers** explore a repertoire more heavily weighted towards the tradition, but with the trumpet it takes on a different feel. In my view, the group is a bit misnamed as they freely blend jazz with whatever folk elements they retain; a bit more so than La Bottine Souriante, when they added the brass quartet in 1990. If jazz had been invented in Italo-Occitan country, it might sound this way.



[All for one](#) by The Folk Messengers

The Folk Messengers are Simone Bottasso, diatonic accordion, Camille Passeri on trumpet/fluegelhorn and Anthony Jambon, a jazz guitarist. Camille Passeri's “Boite a Blinks” opens the 10-track set (many of which veer toward the 7 minute mark) with a trumpet-accordion duet; the very talented guitarist Jambon shows off some opening licks. They follow with the lovely, jazz-Celtic, “Diatophonia n.7,” this time with the fluegelhorn replacing the violin, alongside the guitar and accordion.



[Polska Suite](#) by The Folk Messengers

The traditional “Polska Suite” opens with some soft acoustic guitar, reminiscent of Pat Metheny's New Chautauqua, then the accordion enters. On “Sbrando” the trumpet, guitar and accordion dance together, on a reel with elements of La Bottine Souriante.

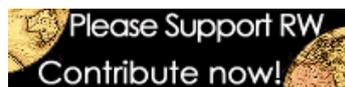


[Roue Libre - Le Rondeau d'Indron](#) by The Folk Messengers

“Valse a Simone” is a traditional-sounding waltz, that morphs into a two-step, then something else, led first by the accordion and then by Passeri's trumpet. In “Roue Libre – le Rondeau d'Indron” - Passeri and Simone Bottasso make you reflect on what it might have sounded like, if Miles Davis had recorded “Sketches of Occitania” a trumpeter's take on tradition. And “British Swing – Ice House Scottish” is a moody, peppy number that reminds one of Junkera's early efforts to combine diatonic/trikitixa and swing, giving way to a languid “Loch Lomond”.

Both recordings are finely produced, primarily instrumental and showcase the folk tradition of the region in a flavorful jazzy setting that emphasizes the rich musical vocabulary of the Bottassos. There is no condescension to the listener, no three-minute opener with an easy hook, just fine musicianship. - David Cox

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