

RAFIKI JAZZ

Album out now 'Har Dam Sahara' on Riverboat Records



New album release 'Saraba (Utopia)' Spring 2019 Release & Touring

Media Quotes

The Album

Rafiki Jazz, the best of British! How to do 'East meets West' with subtlety & flair...an acoustic album full of space and light (**Songlines**** Top of the World album**)

Powerful (**Financial Times******)

We're loving the Rafiki Jazz album (**BBC World on 3**)

Impressive, elegant & wide-ranging..a mesmerising album of devotional songs from Africa, the Middle East & Asia by a British band who specialise in multicultural fusion (**The Guardian******)

The most diverse band in the UK...excellent, Sufi-inspired, luxuriant sounds. Reworking traditions, the band's aesthetic is acoustic & recorded live (**London Evening Standard******)

A musical masala fizzing with individual sounds, resonates with emotion and power (**Northern Sky*******)

Every track on this CD deserves to be played on repeat until they are all etched, beat for beat, into your memory' (**Songlines **** Rough Guide to Acoustic India feat. Rafiki Jazz**)

Yaseen and Raz's vocals weave a beautiful harmony which soars above violin, tabla, kora & ney with an ethereal quality that lifts the spirits and sends thoughts inwards. This is history preserved in song & you find yourself easily slipping into the reality Rafiki Jazz has created (**Qantara.de**)

Onstage

Loved seeing Rafiki Jazz last night. A stunning, virtuosic, internationalist show
(BBC Folk Singer of the Year **Nancy Kerr**)

Close your eyes, it's the music you'd expect to hear in heaven (Dimitris Diamadis: **Talking Gigs**)

The most diverse band in the UK, a host of musicians spanning four continents with migrant & refugee artists at its heart & immense sincerity and compassion coursing through their songs
(Sashwati Mira Sengupta: **Counterpoint Arts**)

Global griots made from Northern grit! (Sara Domville: **More Music**)

A truly spellbinding performance, my **WOMAD 2018** highlight (Katharina Herrman: **e-Festivals**)

A truly mesmeric & uplifting experience, thank you Rafiki Jazz for making my day feel so much lighter
(Fareeda Khan: **Transcender Festival London**)

The Rafikians were truly brilliant, standing ovation & so much love for your music!
(Joy Lamont **Shewsbury Folk Festival**)

SHORT 2019 BIO

RAFIKI JAZZ #FourthWorldMusic

'Rafiki Jazz..the best of British'
(**Songlines** Top of the World album)

Northern England's global collective **Rafiki Jazz** migrate to a new utopian soundworld for their next album release '**Saraba**' as a fitting sequel to their *Transglobal World Music Chart*-climbing album of devotional grooves '*Har Dam Sahara*' (Riverboat Records)

'*Saraba (Utopia)*' is adventurous world music of our times which lands you in a kind of zone of displacement occupied by enchanted voices, deep memories & rootsy folk histories. Live-recorded in a series of studio-residencies through 2018, with every cascading note you can feel the intimacy & immediacy of a *Rafiki Jazz* gig.

Joining the band's compelling vocal heartbeat of *Sufi Sarah Yaseen*, Hebrew-Hindi troubadour *Avital Raz*, Egyptian Coptic maestro *Mina Salama* and Senegalese griot *Kadialy Kouyate* at the core of this band's unique *global masala*, the much-loved *Rafiki*'s new album & selected live shows will feature some inspired guest singers including English folk icon *Nancy Kerr* & Gaelic rising star *Kaitlin Ross*.

Be taken away by music of this world and the next, to a space where kora & tabla dance with berimbau & bansuri, oud & steelpan, and much more.. Enchanting, soulful, exquisite!

lyrics : Urdu, Hebrew, Punjabi, Mandinka, Hindi, English, Gaelic, Coptic
onstage: kora, oud, ney, violin, steelpans, bass, berimbau, tabla, guitar, tanpura, derbuka, bansuri

SINGERS & PLAYERS

Sarah Yaseen (UK/Pakistan) Urdu & Punjabi vocals, percussion
Avital Raz (Israel/UK) Hebrew & Hindi vocals, tanpura
Mina Mikhail Salama (Egypt/UK) Coptic vocals, oud, ney & kawala flutes, duduk
Kadialy Kouyate (Senegal/UK) Mandinka & Wolof vocals, kora, sabar
Cath Carr (UK/Nigeria) guitar, steelpans
Tony Koni (UK) bass guitar, sabar
Johnny Ball (UK) tabla, derbuka, santoor
Guery Tibirica (Brazil/UK) berimbau, pandeiro, gumbé
Vijay Venkat (India/UK) Carnatic violin, bansuri

DISCOGRAPHY

2007 'Big Muzik from Over There' (KoniEP2007)
2009 'More Big Muzik from Over There (KoniCD009)
2012 'No Lines No Separation' (Vinyl 10" RR1)
2014 'At Kriol Junction' (KoniCDE010)
2017 'Har Dam Sahara' (TUGCD1106)
2017 'Rough Guide to Acoustic India' track 04 'Har Chand Sahara' (RGNET1361)
2018 'Rough Guide to World Music 25th Anniversary Edition' track 01 'Sunno' (RGNET1370CD)
2018 'Stimela! 20 Years of Refugee Week' track 15 'Tasbih'(bandcamp.com)

Listen <https://soundcloud.com/rafiki-jazz/sets/har-dam-sahara>

Watch <https://vimeo.com/album/1735438>

Website www.rafikijazz.co.uk

CDs <http://www.worldmusic.net/store/item/TUG1106/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/rafikijazz>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/rafikijazz/>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/rafikijazz/>

PRESS BIO

Rafiki Jazz celebrate unity in diversity with a unique shape-shifting sound. Rooted in modern Britain yet inspired by ancient musical traditions both near and far, their recent third album release '*Har Dam Sahara*' (*Riverboat*) is a love-letter to this intricate world in all its beauty and complexity '*an elegant, mesmerising album of world devotional songs*' (*Robin Denselow: The Guardian*), whilst their upcoming 2019 release '*Saraba*' hints at even more joyous & deep music from the heart.

Founded in Sheffield in 2006 *Rafiki Jazz* bring together adventurous regional roots and jazz artists with gifted musicians with migrant and refugee backgrounds. United by a vision to make music in an accessible style that transcends cultural & language boundaries, their sound is fresh but traditional, and expresses the power and beauty of difference.

With nine band members spanning four continents' music & culture, they seamlessly combine the sounds of an array of some of the world's most iconic folk instruments. Onstage you'll see & hear West African *kora*, Caribbean *steelpan*, Indian *tabla*, *tanpura*, & *bansuri* flute, Brazilian *berimbau*, and Arabic *ney* and *oud*, and this is just their rhythm section! Voices and world languages are at the true heart of the *Rafikian* sound, woven together by the inspirational frontline singing of *Sufi Sarah Yaseen*, Hebrew & Hindi vocalist *Avital Raz*, Egyptian Coptic maestro *Mina Salama* and Senegalese *griot Kadialy Kouyate*. As if this wasn't quite enough, the collective's recording and touring projects often include guest vocalists invited in from the international folk & roots scene..the most recent including English folk icon *Nancy Kerr*, Gaelic rising star *Kaitlin Ross*, & Colombian shamanic overtone chanter *Juan Gabriel Gutierrez*.

After over a decade of recording and touring adventures, this year sees the band's determination to build further on music as a powerful commentary on contemporary issues of migration, displacement and human rights, through compelling boundary-hopping performances of their trademark *#FourthWorldMusic*. Once experienced live, there's a clear, immensely memorable and heartwarming pleasure generated..as much from feeling the rough and gutsy Yorkshire *northern grit* that binds *Rafiki Jazz* together as an ensemble & working team..as from recognising the power & spirit of culture & virtuosity, globalism & faith, that is collectively embedded from these *Rafikian*'s individual musical roots.

Standout 2018 *Rafiki Jazz* appearances included a memorable after-midnight WOMAD 2018 Siam mainstage set, a standing ovation for their world music breakthrough onto the British folk scene in front of Shrewsbury Folk Festival's mainstage crowd, a crazy night launching new Islington venue London Jukebox, the pleasure of supporting indie star *Nadine Shah* at Sage Gateshead's Great Northern Soundtracks, and an ecstatic *UpClose* tour homecoming gig for Sheffield's Crucible Theatre showcasing the emotive new songs you can hear on the upcoming 4th album '*Saraba*'

And..just for the record..*Rafiki Jazz* have toured across Tasmania for their *Ten Days Festival*, at tiny village halls UK-wide, and at some of the bigger places too..like London Southbank Centre's *Meltdown* & The Barbican's *Transcender*, the BBC R3 Stage at *Womad* & at the *London African Music Festival*. They distil the meaning of their name as *Rafiki* (*Swahili*) for 'Friends' and *Jazz* for 'Freedom'

