

## Press Reviews • Babak-o-Doestan

Open sparkling music, sung freshly by Amiri in which he easily touches the heart of the music. Compositions full of inventive chord progressions and original instrument combinations, all arranged with charming affection.

*Mattie Poels, Musicframes*

This very special set of musicians performs a very special kind of music. [*Babak-o-Doestan's album*] Restless combines elements that clearly bear the handwriting of the artists involved. Fado elements blend together with jazzy harmonies or oriental sounds. All this makes the music of Babak-o-Doestan unique – relaxed, exotic but still familiar – chamber music of a quality, your ears only rarely come across. And so it is no surprise that the album Restless is in the Netherlands much applauded. And they deserve even more.

*Andreas Nöthen, Insight Worldmusic Magazine*

Poetry set to music, about love and longing, oriental melodies that melted seamlessly into jazzy themes and Latin rhythms... The evening unfolded like an intimate musical concert with friends: emotional, exuberant, then dreamy and unassuming. A memorable musical evening, inspired by – as the musicians claimed – ‘sun, wind, longing, homesickness, coffee and cigarettes’. It almost makes you want to light one up.

*Corrie Verkerk, Het Parool*

They hypnotized us with their sound, the beautiful voice and guitar of Babak, dressed with the soothing sound of Heather's cello, spiced with Minze's rhythm and Murat's bass blend, and topped with Bam's piano play. Again we were in awe. A must hear!

*Acoustic Roots, Concertzender Radio*

One of the unusual things about this band is the high level of collaboration on the stage, which audiences often mention that they admire to watch at the live performances. They seem to be more than just bandmates, they are a creative unity.

*Andreas Nöthen, Insight Worldmusic Magazine*

Iranian cajón beats with finger shakers! The Amsterdammer Minze Koopman, percussionist of the group, leads us into the world of the 5/4, 7/8, 13/8 and 15/8 time signatures on the cajón and poetic Persian song. From finger technique, to brushes, rod and finger shakers, the cajón beats that shape and support the unique Babak-o-Doestan sound.

*Slagwerkrant (Issue No.178)*

Babak-o-Doestan's album 'Restless' makes it to the **TOP 10 albums** of 2013 (worldmusic).

*Platomania/Concerto* <http://www.platomania.eu/etalage/list/id/2050>

These five very experienced musicians always play together in this combination - and that's something you can hear. And the combination is special. The instrumentation is: Spanish guitar, cello, cajón, bass guitar and piano.

The lead singer of this ensemble, Babak Amiri came from Tehran and sings in Persian. He does this both very convincingly and in a relaxed manner, an attractive combination. That Dutch audiences generally do not speak Persian is absolutely not a problem. It adds something mystical, and the melancholy and passion and longing come across anyway.

With carefully played and dosed guitar parts, Amiri confirms the dynamics and the arrangements. And in between songs he jokes with the audience in Dutch. And wow, what a great bass! Murat Yatmaz played a fantastic five string Fodera. A bass to absolutely treasure, all the more because of how exceptionally well he can play it. Super accompaniment *and* solos. Heather Leslie played beautifully on the cello, and the supporting and solo parts were elegantly knit into the arrangements.

Resumé: a very good ensemble. I think we may call it '*Oriental jazz*'. Go see them, buy their album. I was too late, because the cd's sold out in no time after the show.

***Ad van den Berg, Prohow***



**Babak Amiri (IRN)**  
voice/guitar/composition

**Heather Leslie (CAN)**  
cello

**Bam Commijs (NLD)**  
piano

**Murat Yatmaz (TUR)**  
bass guitar

**Minze Koopman (NLD)**  
percussion