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Newspaper of the year

Artist **Naïssam Jalal**

Album **Healing Rituals**

Label **Les Couleurs du Son**

Jazz
album of
the month



In the startling sound of the Paris-raised, Franco-Syrian improviser and composer Naïssam Jalal, the flute's oldest virtues and wildest modern manifestations become one. It came into its own as a solo jazz instrument through such pioneers as Yusef Lateef, Herbie Mann and Rahsaan Roland Kirk in the 1950s and 60s, and Jalal is a comparable 21st-century visionary, drawing on Arabic, African, classical and jazz techniques, hip-hop and more. Time spent in hospital inspired the cinematic *Healing Rituals*, an album later realised with skilful partners Clément Petit on cello, Claude Tchamitchian on bass and Zaza Desiderio on drums.

Here, Jalal salutes the inspirations from the natural world that helped her back to health. *Rituel du Vent* is a standout, with a hooting, twisting melody. *Rituel de la Forêt* builds from eerie vocal and birdlike sounds to a thundering climax, *Rituel de la Lune* from a percussive bass intro to a dizzying Jalal improv crescendo of headlong flute runs and semi-vocalised whoops. A cert for the end-of-year hitlists. **John Fordham**