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By George W. Harris

Here's a great and creative release by guitarist Lawson Rollins that will defy labels, except "Essential." Successfully mixing disparate styles Persian, Indian, North and South American, Lawson has put out a well conceived disc that can be as well appreciated by fans who want to delve deeply into each musical nuance, or simply enjoy the romantic hues of each melody. Each tune is filled with moments of free spirited drama segueing into panoramic spaciousness. On the latin tinged "Café Jobim" and title tune, Flora Purim and Airto Moreira join in for some breathtaking singing and percussion work, most notably mixing Indian tables on the former. "New World Raga" successfully bridges Indian and Arabic harmonies with latin flamenco guitar playing, no small feat indeed! The gorgeous and delicate "For JoAnn" features luscious string work as the frame for Rollin's embracing and genteel guitar work. Thoroughly original, yet without having to resort to cacophony or cheap tricks. A truly ecumenical approach to music has made Rollins' latest release one of the year's best.