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## **Espirito**

Lawson Rollins, Infinita Records

Jazz guitarist Lawson Rollins meticulously chisels his skill, culture and passion into his most ambitious album, *Espirito*. Following up with the success of his debut album, *Infinita* (2008), Mr. Rollins produced his second album with the same co-producers Shahin Shahida and Dominic Camardella and many of the same musicians including Brazilian icon Flora Purim and her husband, master percussionist Airtó Moreira, Grammy-winning violinist Charlie Bisharat (*Shadowfax*), Afghan vocalist Humayun Khan (harmonium), Jeff Elliot (trumpet), Randy Tico (bass), and Dave Bryant (drums, percussion). Mr. Rollins and his friends traveled to such culturally vibrant locales as Spain, Brazil, Cuba, Persia, Afghanistan, and India and along the way incorporated some sensible underpinnings of American pop. While the album is dense with extraordinary musicianship, scholarly composition, and a “We Are the World” alchemy of culture, Mr. Rollins manages to never overplay the music or overwhelm the listeners. This musical journey sets a variety of accessible moods -- infectious dance rhythms, somber ballads that stir emotion and provoke thought, love songs that send the imagination soaring, and intricate pieces that stimulate adventure, intrigue and mystery. Of special note is “Moonlight Samba,” a seductive Latin groove with a breezy melody, muted trumpet accents, and celestial vocals from Ms. Purim and Mr. Moreira. The song is radiantly illuminated by Mr. Rollins’ acoustic guitar, which is thoughtfully restrained until erupting into an emotionally-charged plea midway through.