

**Jamie Hopkings** · **Sultans of String**  
**Symphony!**

(CD - Red River / Relativity #MCK 2055)

[Overview](#)[Credits](#)

Share this page

**Review by James Manheim** [-]

The Toronto quintet Sultans of String has released several albums that fuse a variety of Mediterranean musical traditions: gypsy jazz, flamenco, Arabic and Turkish music, along with Latin rhythms. This is impressive in that none of the group members comes from that part of the world, and the fusion is of a sort that could come from few places other than highly multicultural Canada. The *Symphony!* album includes, as the name suggests, a full orchestra, apparently assembled for the occasion rather than borrowed from an existing ensemble (which tells you something in itself about how this group has caught on in its Canadian homeland). The mix doesn't depart too far from that on the group's earlier three albums, however, and fans of the group can confidently plan on enjoying this release. The orchestra for the most part plays a supporting role, embellishing the music as a piece proceeds. More consequential to the overall sound are the guest stars, ranging from oud player Bassam Bishara to ukulele master James Hill to the legendary Paddy Moloney, among several others: an unusually diverse group indeed. Still, the vaguely Arabic six-string violin of leader Chris McKhool remains central to the sound, adapting itself effortlessly to Gypsy music, flamenco, and various kind of Canadiana jazzed up with ethnic percussion. You have to like pop fusions of world music to like this, of course, but this Canadian example is a nifty take on the genre.

[Collapse](#) ↑**Track Listing**

Sample	Title/Composer	Performer	Time
1	<b>Monti's Revenge</b> Kevin Laliberté / Chris McKhool	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	5:02
2	<b>Palmas Sinfonia</b> Bret Menezes / Eddie Paton	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	5:17
3	<b>Josie</b> Kevin Laliberté / Chris McKhool	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	6:10
4	<b>Emerald Swing</b> Kevin Laliberté / Chris McKhool	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	4:02
5	<b>Sable Island</b> Kevin Laliberté / Chris McKhool	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	6:42
6	<b>A Place to Call Home</b> Kevin Laliberté	Jamie Hopkings / Sultans of String	4:00

**Main Album**  
**Symphony!**  
2013**Release Date** September 17, 2013**Label**  
Red River / Relativity**Format** CD**Duration** 48:48**Release Info**  
Studio Recording**Catalog #** MCK 2055[Metadata IDs +](#)[Submit Corrections](#)

**1 WALL CALENDAR**  
for \$16  
**\$11.99**

**Vistaprint.ca** [Order Now](#)