



# Michel Banabila

## *Wah-Wah Whispers*

CD / LP / Digital

Release: March 19th 2021



Ever since he released his music in the early '80s (1983, to be exact), Michel Banabila has been hard to pinpoint to a specific genre or style. His musical output includes jazz, experimental cut-up electronics, world music (especially influenced by the Fourth World music as developed by Jon Hassell), New Age, eclectic pop tunes, music for dance or other stage projects, and soundtracks for TV productions. Some listeners may have found it somewhat difficult throughout the years to find their way in this versatile output that includes very different genres.

Because of this versatility Banabila has grown into one of the most fascinating musicians in Europe and was always highly acclaimed by critics, which was well deserved. Nevertheless – for possibly that very same reason his work never came across the radar of most people, and that is something he does not deserve. When diving deeper into his output, one gets familiar with the trademark Banabila sound: his personal ways of using samples, the way he incorporates vocal fragments, the fact that there is always an emotional layer you can relate to, even in his most abstract works.

Over the years, Banabila's work has progressed and evolved in different directions. It must be weird for any creative artist when the interest of new audiences (and labels) focuses on your earlier work - work that you have long left behind while exploring new directions. On the other hand: Whoever gets interested in your older work may also want to explore the newer stuff (which means they have almost forty years to explore, just imagine!).

For this particular release, Bureau B chose a different approach. Instead of archiving early works from the 1980s, *Wah-Wah Whispers* focuses on Banabila's more recent output. It is a collection of works showcasing many facets of his music: a journey visiting the minimal and cinematic sample scape in the opener *Take Me There*, a robotic reggae-like rhythm (*Tic Tac*), contemplative ambient / fourth world scenes evolving into a downright funky beat (*Hidden Story*), the synth version of *Secunde*, and more. The album ends with a kaleidoscope of atmospheres gradually building up to a noise climax in *Narita* (the only collaboration track on the album, with Rutger Zuydervelt / Machinefabriek).

No single compilation album could really do justice to the massive scope of Banabila's output since 1983, but with *Wah-Wah Whispers*, Bureau B did a wonderful job to facilitate a view into his more recent work (2013-2020, with the exception of *Tic Tac*, which is from 2001).

This album is an invitation that may lead to explore Banabila's back catalogue and dive deeper into the work of one of Holland's most creative independent artists.

**- Peter van Cooten**

### Promotion

Bureau B  
Matthias Kämpflein  
+49(0)40-881666-63  
[mk@bureau-b.com](mailto:mk@bureau-b.com)  
[www.bureau-b.com](http://www.bureau-b.com)

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### Tracklisting

- |                  |                                  |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Take Me There | 5. Out Of Sync                   |
| 2. Tic Tac       | 6. Secunde Reprise               |
| 3. Branches      | 7. Wah-Wah Whispers              |
| 4. Hidden Story  | 8. Narita (feat. Machinefabriek) |