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YOUNG & ROLLINS "Mosaic" Bolero Records

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WASHINGTON-bred guitarists Dan Young and Lawson Rollins have two advantages that help set them apart from most of the Nuevo Flamenco competition: First, they have a genuine flair for producing conversational gambits and fiery call-and-response patterns. Second, they never seem at a loss for composing engaging tunes that contrast bright themes with a colorful variety of Latin beats.

Listeners familiar with their previous recordings won't find any surprises here, but they will find plenty of familiar pleasures: the seamless exchanges that vibrantly punctuate "Mistral"; the blue-note bends that color "Madrugada"; the sweeping chromaticism that ignites "Fuego Gitano"; the trademark assimilation of Mediterranean and Caribbean influences, with its dramatic flamenco guitar flourishes and sunny reggae beats.

Beginning with the opening cut, the duo's well-matched virtuosity is on display, generating intricately woven passages and dovetailing runs. Several ballads, however, tunefully temper the mood, particularly "Mediterranean Romance," a ruminative charmer.

-- Mike Joyce