



Blount, Jake / Obomsawin, Mali

Symbiont

Cat-Ref.	SFW40265
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Label	Smithsonian Folkways (LC-09628)
Style	World Music / USA / Folk

From the first notes of *symbiont*, the radical new collaborative album and document of Black and Indigenous futurism from Jake Blount and Mali Obomsawin, the listener is met with rising tides, massive droughts, and the appearance of an iconoclastic uprising amidst the world's indifference. Questions of future or present tense swirl around the music as the duo unspools the intertwined threads of racial and climate justice. Amid rumbling synthesizer drones, the thrum of banjo, and the thwack of drum machines, a whisper of truth can be heard: this crisis has been unfolding for centuries.

Jake Blount and Mali Obomsawin are two award-winning performing artists who have joined forces on their upcoming Smithsonian Folkways release, *symbiont* (2024). Blount, (pronounced: blunt) is a renowned interpreter of Black folk music recognized for his skill as a string band musician, and his unprecedented Afrofuturist work in sound archives and song collections. In his hands, the banjo, fiddle, electric guitar and synthesizer become ceremonial objects used to channel the insurgent creativity of his forebears. Obomsawin (Odanak First Nation) is a celebrated composer and bassist-vocalist in free jazz and experimental music. Known for her evocative and ground-breaking debut *Sweet Tooth* (2022), Mali's work as a composer and bandleader centers on the imprint of Indigenous music traditions in jazz and "American" genres, using historical, archival, and community research as a spine for improvisation. Obomsawin's shoegaze project with guitarist Magdalena Abrego "Deerlady" also released music in early 2024 and has quickly won over young punks and sadgirls across Indian Country—cinching Mali's reputation as an artist uncontainable by genre.

On *symbiont*, Obomsawin's and Blount's "genrequeer" approach to their respective traditions has earned a place in some of the very same archives from which they extract their repertoire. In defiance of genre categories, revisionist histories and linear time, Blount and Obomsawin have fashioned an Indigenous and Afrofuturist folklore that disintegrates the boundaries between acoustic and electric, artist and medium, and ancestor and progeny.

Featured artist

Obomsawin, Mali

Band member

Jake Blount

percussion, synthesizers, fiddle, banjo-ukulele, vocals

Mali Obomsawin

bass, vocals, percussion

Guest artist

Jeanne Meserve

voiceover

Galileo Music Communication GmbH - Dachauer Str. 5-7 - 82256 Fürstenfeldbruck

Joe Rainey	vocals
John Trudell	samples
Joseph DeJarnette	bass
Magdalena Abrego	guitar
Sidy Maïga	percussion
Taylor Ho Bynum	cornet, conch trumpet

Tracklist

1.	Prelude feat. Jeanne Meserve	00:50
2.	What's You Gonna Do When the World's On Fire	03:12
3.	No Hiding Place feat. Sidy Maïga	03:19
4.	My Way's Cloudy feat. Joe Rainey	03:20
5.	Mother	04:28
6.	Stars Beging to Fall feat. Taylor Ho Bynum	03:45
7.	The Green Road	02:59
8.	Live Humble	04:16
9.	In the Garden	04:18
10.	Come Down Ancients	02:59
11.	Old Indian Hymn	03:19