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PLAYLIST | Ben Ratliff

Gianmaria Testa

A wheezy-voiced Italian folk-pop singer, Mr. Testa put out the album "Extra-Muros" in Europe in 1996; it is just now having its first American release (Le Chant du Monde). If you've heard Paolo Conte, you'll know the general landscape of this music. The songs are full of weathered romanticism, tango, jazz and darkened skies. Mr. Testa's songs don't have the burned-out piquancy of Mr. Conte's, but the music is sturdier and more earthbound, including the thick tone of the bassist François Moutain — more suited to the jazz club of today, versus Mr. Conte's evocation of the vague past.