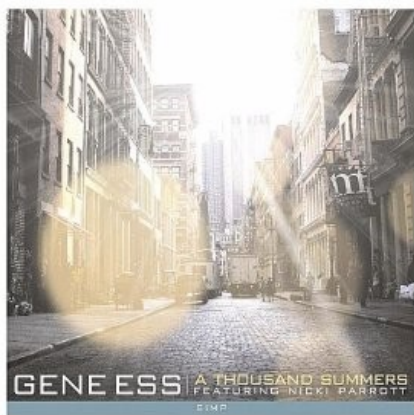




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Issue 123 Reviews

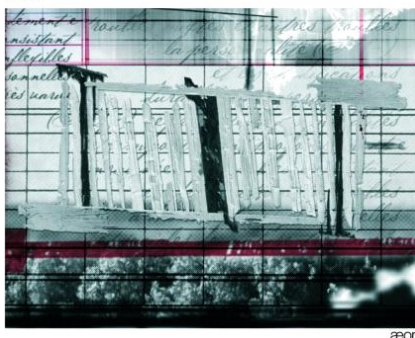
Our latest reviews for your reading and listening pleasure!



Gene Ess & Nikki Parrott – A THOUSAND SUMMERS: The jazz I’ve reviewed by Gene previously was more in the “instrumental” category... with Nikki’s splendid vocal talent joining him, he’s opened up whole new vistas for the listener, especially on excellent pieces like “[One Day I’ll Fly Away](#)“... his guitar intro on this one is mighty mellow, & when Nikki’s vocal kicks in, it’s at just the right pace to prod your emotions with the “right stuff” – this one is a beaut! The 8:29 “[The Old Country](#)” is a sonic story you will carry ’round for months (maybe years) to come. The

capstone performance, & my favorite track, though, is the down & bluesy “Charade”... truly one of the best renditions I’ve ever heard! I give Gene & Nikki my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. Get more information at [Gene’s site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

Mikko Innanen
F60.8



Mikko Innanen – F.60 DIGITAL HOMERECORDINGS: When you want to find out what an artist is “truly all about”, seek out their earliest recordings... as you listen to the “thump” under Mikko’s reed playing on “[Here I Come](#)“, you’ll realize his rawest potential from those times in the early ’2000’s... this kicks some serious TAIL, folks! Since my own recording and performance work was spawned from the whole “hometaper” thang, I always enjoy pieces like “[Bubbling Under](#)“, with

throb/gristle down under the percussion. It was the extensive reed undertones on “I Know” that got my vote as favorite of the 15 tracks here. Listeners who only want “pure jazz”, with no distractions will probably look elsewhere, but if you love homerecordings as much as I do, you’ll agree when I declare this MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.97. Get more information at the [label page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

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COPERNICUS

Copernicus – NOTHING EXISTS: I



clearly remember reviewing this one back in the early days of this 'zine, on the vinyl release... alas, those early issues never got digitized. Suffice it to say that this was a landmark album for spoken-word in those days.. + which, Copernicus was a bit “gentler/kinder” in those days... as on the opener, “[I Won't Hurt You](#)“ ... almost like a sympathetic lover, in some ways. “[Quasimodo](#)” gives you a bit of insight to what you'll hear on the multitude of sonics he evolved to, with heavier ranting and disjointed instruments

clanging against his grating vocal/spoken-word performance. The “classic” on this CD, though, is the 5:08 “[Nagasaki](#)” – driving rock against the kinda' ranting that is eternal. I give Copernicus a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, though I'll caution that “strictly jazz” fans may have to adjust their mental landscape before they can enjoy this. “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.97. Get more information at the [MOONJUNE page](#) for this CD re-release. *Rotcod Zzaj*



Steven C – SPIRITUAL PIANO: My first review of Steven's most pleasant piano work was in [issue # 108](#), and he keeps up his tradition of total enchantment for the listener on this new release. One odd title that caught my ear (and my eye) was “[Temporary Space Suits](#)“... I just loved the underlying bass, and found the track to be very satisfying. “[Believe-Achieve](#)” was quite inspiring, as well, with some great strings woven in behind Steven's solid keyboard style/touch. Some of our more hardcore jazz fans may not like the fact that none of the 14 tracks are longer

than 3:44, but those who live for piano with great instruments woven in will agree when I declare this MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.97. Get more information , or purchase the CD (direct downloads available) at [Steven's page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Mark Sherman – THE L.A. SESSIONS: With Mark's magical vibraphone playing, it really doesn't matter where the sessions are – the music will be stellar. As you groove to the opener, “[Woody N' You](#)“, you'll hear what I'm talkin' 'bout right after the first couple of bars. Bill Cunliffe's Hammond B3 on “[Bag's Groove](#)” is superb, as well as on-time drums from Charles Ruggiero & John Chiodini's totally pro guitar work will lull you (quickly) into a sense of well-being that isn't false on one note – this is the real deal, folks! You get an even dozen tracks to rotate (over & over & over) on your

playlists, & none more poignant (I think – it was my favorite) than the 5:06 “[Serpent's Tooth](#)“ ... this one starts off in high gear & doesn't stop until the very last note (if you know what I mean). This grand jazz excursion gets another MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, most notably for those who love great vibes & excellent Hammond B3. “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.99. Get more information at [Mark's site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Uwe Gronau – TIME RIDER: I reviewed a CD from Uwe in [issue # 114](#) (quite favorably, I might add). One of my comments on that 35-



song double-CD was that Uwe truly understands how important variety is... & even though this new one isn't a double, there are still 20 tracks, & each one inspires a different mood... the gentle synth/piano work on "[Sweet Memory](#)" morphs very nicely into the kalimba-like rhythms of "[Novel Scene](#)" – one of my favorite tracks on the CD... some nice/spooky vocal work on it that's very attractive to my aural appendages. I also dug deeply on the

gentle eastern influences on "[Oriental Journey](#)"... some excellent backbeat bass work on this one, too. It was the sweeping synth work on "[Caged](#)" that made it my favorite on the album, though. This gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. Get more information at [Uwe's site](#) for this CD. *Rotcod Zzaj*



Simak Dialog – DEMI MASA: I've had the pleasure of reviewing these folks (from Jakarta) several times now, most recently in [issue # 121](#)... if any music can be called "progressive jazz" – this is IT! A great f'r'example is "[Salilana Pertama \(Forever, Part 1\)](#)", which clocks in at a very healthy 14:01 – epic, with slow builds to heat like magma! For a taste of something more hectic & modern-sounding (tho' short at 2:28), I've no doubt you'll enjoy "[Trah Lor – Laras \(Northern People – Voices\)](#)" as heartily as did I – great tune. My absolute favorite piece on the 9-song

adventure was the closer, "Disapih (Being Away)", though... & not just because it's another epic – but because the mood changes come hot/heavy. These folks are among the tightest jazz players I've heard in the last 5 years, & (as many of you know) that really IS saying something – because I've heard a LOT of music/players/bands in that time span. They once again get a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at the [MOONJUNE page for this CD](#).

Rotcod Zzaj



Maria Jameau and Blue Brazil – GEMA:

This kind of beautiful music proves the point that you don't have to understand one word of the song to grasp the soul behind it! Maria and her friends paint Latin-influenced jazz for you that just won't stop coming back into your head, like the lively "[Tristeza Pe No Chao](#)"... superb and invigorating! Her rendition of the standard Brazil jazz piece "[Girl From Ipanema](#)" is both elegant and inspiring. Her music definitely takes me back (to the mid-to-late '60's) when Stan Getz was partnering with Gilberto – a whole different mood than most of

us are in today.... very pleasant to remember (or experience anew). My personal favorite (probably because of the heavy percussion) was "[Mas Que Nada](#)"... Maria surely "owns" this tune! Impressive & well worthy of my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, especially for those who can't do without a bit o' Latin jazz in their musical diet! Get more information at [Maria's page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Peter Appleyard – THE LOST 1974 SESSIONS: One small word describes the



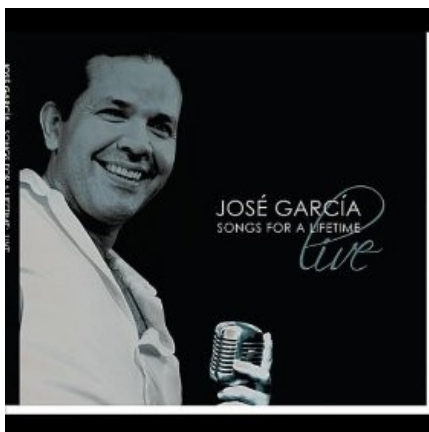
music that Peter capture here – “tasty”! In addition to 11 super-hot tracks, you get to listen to outtakes in the studio with big-name players like Hank Jones, Zoot Sims, Bobby Hackett (among others) cavorting around as they record & play. Great tunes like “[After You’ve Gone](#)” will thrill all you old-school jazz lovers to the bone, & you’ll listen over & over (& over) again! Peter was definitely “looking ahead” when he had the forethought to capture this music for future generations to learn from

& groove upon. My personal favorite track was “[Indiana](#)”... short, but with some super-seat material! This one gets a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.95. Get more information at the [True North Records site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



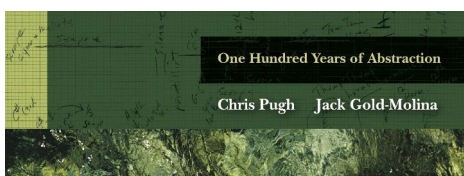
Josh Levinson Sextet: CHAUNCEY STREET: The horns are prevalent on this 11-song jazz odyssey, which makes sense, since Josh plays trumpet & flugelhorn (he’s joined by Kenny Shanker on tenor/soprano sax, Noah Bless on trombone, Brian Fishler on drums, Jeb Patton (& Mike Eckroth) on piano & Peter Brendler on bass)... you’ll hear why I fell in love with his all-original compositions right away as you listen to the groove on the 5:43 “[Wired](#)”, or the funk-step cool of “[Heat](#)”. Josh played in a lot of bands where the focus was finger-poppin’ funk in his early days, and he learned those

lessons well, as evidenced by my favorite cut on the CD, the fully funk-i-fied “[My Blues](#)”... you owe it to your ears (& your booty) to listen to all eleven tracks on headphones, at least the first time around. This is one of the best trumpet-based jazz bands I’ve heard (yet) in 2012. I give Josh & crew a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. Get more information at [Josh’s FB page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Jose Garcia – SONGS FOR A LIFETIME/LIVE: There are a whole host of mem’ries that go with listening to Jose’s crooning session on this CD. The opener, “[I Get A Kick Out Of You](#)” feels a lot like those old Andy Williams TV hours I used to watch every week... it’s clear that (like those gents in the old days) Jose loves singing & giving of himself to those in the audience. The guitar backing on “[I Wish You Love](#)” is nicely paced, & Jose tells the story just as well as some of those gents (like Perry Como) I mentioned above. The whole point of music like this (for listeners like me,

anyway) is to get the listener in the groove that allows them to forget the troubles they’ve got in their kit bag, & Garcia does a fine job of that, no doubt. I give him a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for these 10 silk-smooth tunes. “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.96. Get more information at [Jose’s page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

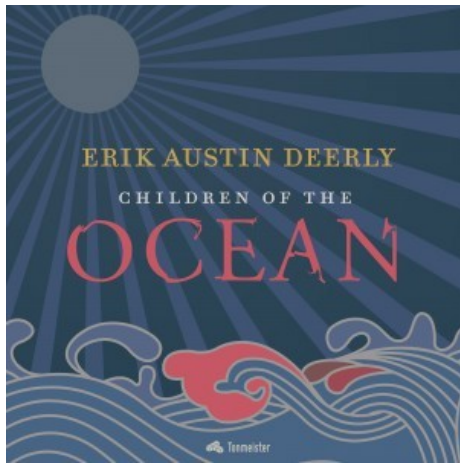


Chris Pugh and Jack Gold – ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF ABSTRACTION: It really doesn’t matter if it’s 100 years, months or minutes; what Jack & Chris lay down for your aural



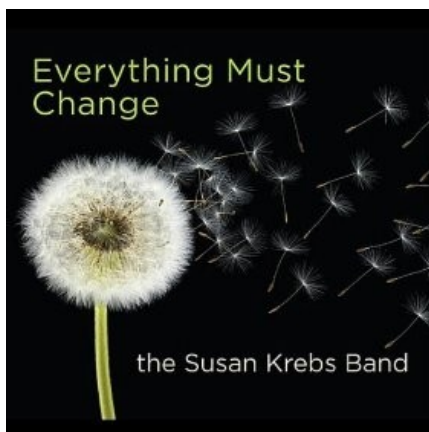
appendages on this fantastic improvised adventure is clearly far above average. The “parts”, as they call them (c’mon guys, give them titles), do an excellent job of spanning all those years of abstraction. On “Part I”, I was particularly impressed with the fluidity of Chris’s guitar work. There are sections on that part that remind me of work I’ve done with Ernesto Diaz-Infante, by the

way. The biggest drawback for this CD is that I can’t find samples of the tracks anywhere (Jack/Chris – let me know where they’re at, please). I’ve been writing about this duo for some years now; my most recent encounter was the [INTERVIEW](#) I did with Jack. The real “bottom line”, though, is that if you’re mentally addicted to well-played improvised guitar/drum work, this comes MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED... “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.97. Get more information at [Jack’s site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Erik Austin Deerly - CHILDREN OF THE OCEAN: One of the nicest things about reviewing music here at I.N. is that we aren’t restricted to one genre; Erik’s music is a definite change of pace... as you listen to the opener, “[The Order Cetacea](#)“, you won’t find it difficult to see yourself in the waters of the Indian Ocean – this is a beautiful piece... soothing and full of quiet vigor, no doubt! The electronics and sampling skills Erik demonstrates here are far above average, especially on tunes like the intricate “[Post Hunt Flensing](#)“, the clear favorite track for me. The images on [this short](#)

[VIDEO](#) will stay with you for days, maybe even longer. All-around, this is a totally interesting 47-minute sonic adventure that gets my HIGHLY RECOMMENDED rating... “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.97. Get more information at [Erik’s site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Susan Krebs – EVERYTHING MUST CHANGE: Susan is a “show singer” (as well as an actress & various other arts-related activities), and (you’ll have to forgive me) – it “shows” in her breathy and emotive approach to the 8 tracks on this highly entertaining CD. One of the clear winners on this album is her rendition of “[What Is This Thing Called Love](#)“... it’s almost like hearing an entire drama in the 6:14 the song takes to evolve.... simple, but beautiful! She’s supported by some excellent jazz players (Rich Eames on piano, Jerry Kalaf on drums, Ryan McGillicuddy doing bass and

Chuck Manning on sax), and the high talent shines through on pieces like (my absolute favorite) the closer, “Are Ya’ Havin’ Any Fun”... the Rhodes on this one is superb & will make you come back to this CD again & again on your playlists... I give it a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) of 4.97. Get more information at [Susan’s site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

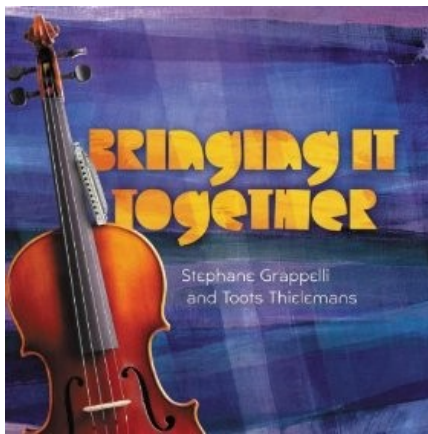


Jacob Deaton – TRIBULATION: I’ve been listening to these seven H-O-T tunes/compositions from Jacob ever since the promoter sent them in (early February 2012),



and that (in itself) says something... his jazz guitar work is among the best I've heard this year, especially on tunes like the closer, "[Sketches Of Trane](#)"... one of the best things about Jacob's playing style is that there is no "rush"... no muscling in to "take over" the music – he's well-versed and totally talented (in the view of my ears, anyway), & so doesn't have any need to overwhelm – but he DOES, I

can tell you! Another excellent track (of the 6 offered) was the bouncy exuberance on "[Eclipse](#)"... he's helped along by alto sax from Akeem Marable, superb piano by Nick Rosen, beautiful bass work from Craig Shaw and full-bore drumming from Justin Chesarek, and they're truly *together!* I'm highly impressed, & you will be too... I give these folks a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. (I can tell you now – you WILL be hearing much more from this talented young gent). Get more information at Jacob's site. *Rotcod Zzaj*



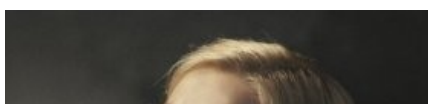
Stephane Grappelli & Toots Thielemans – BRINGING IT TOGETHER: If cool jazz from masters of the form is what you're looking for, you need look no further... this is a killer session, as well-evidenced by their opener, "[Bye Bye Blackbird](#)"... it just doesn't get any better than this! I've been a fan of both of these gents for decades now, & have recently had opportunity to review a whole host of music from Toots. You may not have heard a lot of violin/harp work before (I know I hadn't), but after you scope out wonderful performances like that on "[The Jitterbug](#)

[Waltz](#)", you'll be wondering why you haven't heard such before. It's the soul of the jazz that emerges, rather than the particular instrument a musician plays... when their energy for playing transcends all form, all labels and all instrument combinations, it can't be anything but a winner! I give this one a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99 – as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "best jazz duo". Get more information at the [Allegro Media Group site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Ann Sweeten – IN THE WAKE: My last listen (& review) of Ann's pleasant keyboard work was in [issue # 100](#)... in my opinion, Ann is among the best performing pianists on the planet today. The other truly wonderful thing about her work is her ability to make the music stay at her own pace. As you hear "[Falling Leaves](#)", you'll know what I mean... nothing is rushed, and it's easy for you to picture those leaves settling to the ground. If you then contrast that song with the next, "[Metamorphosis](#)", and listen to the long/extended overtones, you'll hear the

change she's painting (sonically) for you come to life. A total of 11 beautiful compositions will give you much to appreciate. I give Ann (yet another) MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, especially for those who like to take a break from jazz periodically. "EQ" (energy quotient) rating is 4.96. Get more information at [Ann's page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

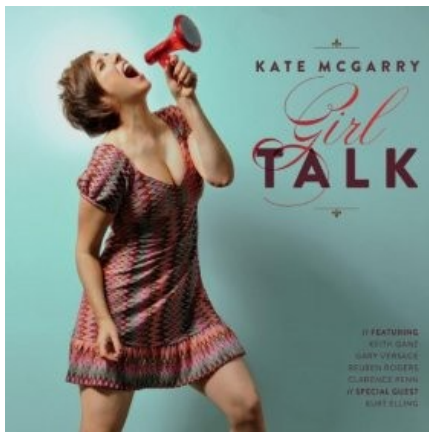


Sarah Elgeti – INTO THE OPEN: Sarah's tenor & soprano sax work (as well as flute & percussion) will please your ears & make you



feel nice, no doubt! One of the nicest tunes I've heard in some years is "[Bossa Among The Trees](#)"... no great mysterious kosmick gypsy jass, this is right from the heart & soul... I'm impressed... her other players are totally adept & ON at all times. One of the freshest pieces I've heard this year is "[Blustering Waves](#)" – tasty energy through & through, this will take you up & down the jazz ladder for a ride you won't soon forget. My favorite track, though,

was the down & funky movement of "Downstairs"... excellent rhythm changes & some fine Rhodes from the keyboard player make it a tune that will stay at the top of my Zen Touch 2 playlist. Sarah is an artist you'll be hearing much more from in the next few years (you heard it here)! I give her a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED on this outing, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.97. Get more information at [Sarah's site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Kate McGarry – GIRL TALK: There are moments (few & far between, I admit) when a reviewer hears such natural purity coming out of the speakers that they *know* it's a "discovery"... now, I don't lay claim to being the person who discovered Kate's marvelous talent, but I certainly do know when what I'm hearing is so energy/talent-filled that there is no equal on the market today. Kate's solid vocal on the down/dirty "[Girl Talk](#)" will chill you to the bone... I equate it (in some ways) to the first time I heard Aretha... yah, Kate's her own singer, but she's GOT that soul – & she knows

how to lay it right out in front of your ears. Her voice IS an instrument on "[I Know That You Know](#)"... & she does all this in her OWN way, not striving to be anybody except Kate – too COOL!!! Firstly, I predict that you will be hearing many more CD's from this hot-talent lady... secondly, I give her my "PICK" of 2012 for "best jazz vocalist"... & thirdly, her work comes MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating at the top of the stack... 5.00, COSMIC! Get more information at [Kate's site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Mikko Innanen/Mika Kallio Duo – SILENCE: I know (from having performed such duos before) that what's really called

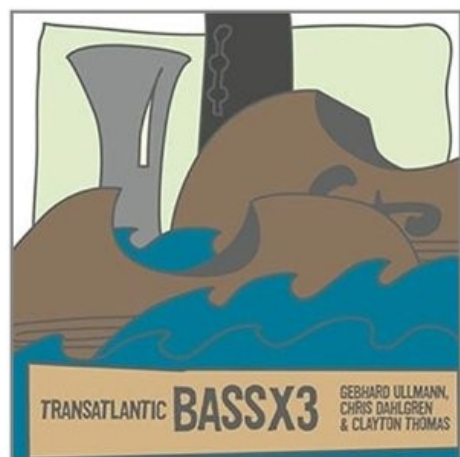
for here is silence from the listener – so that the performers can focus on what they are

working at – the MUSIC! All you need do is listen to the glorious interplay on (my favorite cut), "35"... it's truly too bad that this one didn't have samples (somewhere) available, but you'll have to visit the site & purchase this fantastic 11-song extravaganza, I reckon. The picture on the top left more or less says it all (though it's different from the cover art I saw for the CD, which is on the right above). "Merkur" was my favorite, for it's penetrating energy... "luxury improv" is what I would call this one – odd & different, it's like hearing a genuine conversation between a drummer and a saxist... lol! From an improvised music standpoint, this one gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, though points are deducted on the "EQ" (energy quotient) rating for not having samples up on the web (somewhere – if they are there, please send me the links)... 4.96 (instead of the well-deserved 4.98 it



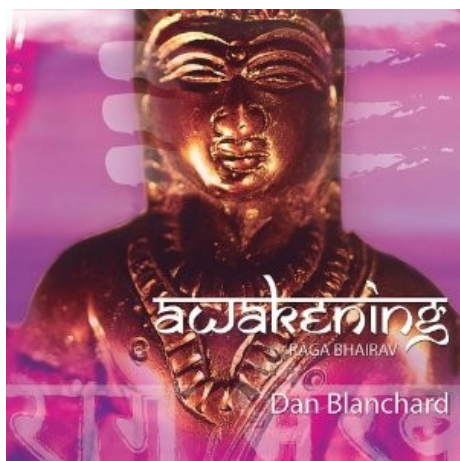
Delerium – GREEN SIDE UP: Hmm... per Wikipedia, “psychotic features” or “hallucinations and delusions”... any way you listen, this quartet (of Stefan Pasborg on drums & percussion, Mikko Innanen on saxophones, Kasper Tranberg on cornet & Jonas Westergaard on bass) is bound to stir up reactions that will adjust your mind-frame. Especially on tunes like the 8:23 opener, “[Dithers for Schwitters](#)“. This CD came in a package of several that Mikko snailed me after I corresponded with him after reviewing his work in [issue # 119](#)... 10 all-original

compositions that dig right down into your brain & rearrange the cells – so even if you weren’t a jazzer before scopin’ out the exuberance of “[Sudden Happiness](#)” – you will be now & forever (this is my favorite track on this CD, by the way... it definitely changes your mood). I’m mightily impressed by all four players, enough so that I (once again) declare their work MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, especially for listeners who don’t believe that “normal” is good enough for their listening! “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.99, STELLAR. Read a bit more about this CD at the [CATALOG page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Gebhard Ullman, Chris Dahlgren & Clayton Thomas – TRANSATLANTIC BASS X3: Many listeners will thoroughly enjoy this work; especially those inclined towards improvised music... some will not (their loss). I’ve reviewed quite a bit of Gebhard’s playing over the last couple of years, most recently in [issue # 104](#), & I’ve been highly impressed with each new release. You’ll get the full impression of just how exciting Gebhard, Chris & Clayton are in their performances as you listen to the opener, “Transatlantic, Part 1”... though this CD doesn’t appear to have samples up yet

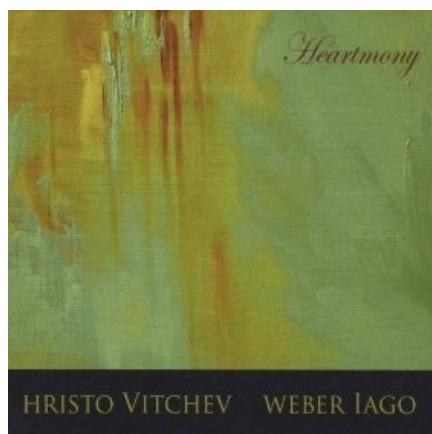
(April 2012 release), you can watch their artistry together in this high-quality [YOUTUBE vid](#). Those who don’t like improvised music will probably shut BASSX3 down right away – but they get a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.98, VOLCANIC! You can read more about this adventurous trio at the [BASSX3 page](#)... I certainly recommend that you do just that! *Rotcod Zzaj*



Dan Blanchard – AWAKENING: Dan does a very effective job of playing the Indian instruments that make up a traditional classical saga; lots of energy, even though the form doesn’t lend itself to the electricity of a world show performance. The unique dimension he’s added on this wonderful CD, though, is the vocal work that you can hear on tunes like the opener, “[Invocation](#)“... that made the listening (repeated listens, I’ll tell you) more intriguing and (I felt) provides an insight into Raga Bhairav that I’d certainly never had before. If it’s joy you’re seeking, you’ll find

yourself totally engaged as you listen to my favorite piece on the CD, “[Elation](#)“. This is a

very enjoyable and enduring set of music that gets my HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for listeners of all persuasions. I give it an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.96. Get more information at [Dan’s site](#). Rotcod Zzaj



Hristo Vitchev & Weber Iago –

HEARTMONY: It could simply be that I haven’t listened to straight-ahead guitar/piano duo jazz in some time, but I get an awfully good feeling as I listen to the 11 tracks that Hristo (guitar) and Weber (piano) offer up here... clearly in the jazz arena, and with a decidedly different approach, tracks like “[Memories In Black and White](#)” (6:02) create some of the most pleasant jazz experiences I’ve had (yet) this year. They are not (at all) at each others’ throats fighting for the lead... rather, it’s totally evident that they are too talented to need to do

that... check out my favorite piece, the rhythmically-anchored “[And May We Meet Again](#)”, to hear why I enjoy their playing so much... though it’s only 2:57, it will stick in your mind for days (if not more) to come – lovely, lovely! I give this duo a heartily deserved MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. Get more information at [Hristo’s site](#). Rotcod Zzaj



Darlene Koldenhoven – SOLITARY

TREASURES: This review is a truly difficult one for me... I hardly ever receive arias, and the opener, “[Nessun Dorma](#)” (from Turandot) is just that. What makes Darlene’s work so interesting is that she’s not just doing vocals... she also arranged, orchestrated and played piano/keyboards on this outing. There is some truly enlightening orchestral work going on here, especially on pieces like “[Lo Specchio](#)” – the arrangements alone make the listening well worth the price of admission. My personal favorite was a Darlene original, “[A Celtic](#)

[American Treasury](#)“.... simple, yet beautiful! With my primary criteria being “high energy”, without regard for genre, I can say that for listeners who love passionate vocal work, this gets my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. OTOH, if you’re only into jazz vocals, you may disagree with my rating; if you’re willing to broaden your horizons a bit, this is an excellent album to test with! “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.97. Get more information at [Darlene’s site](#). Rotcod Zzaj



Harlan Mark Vale/Rotcod Zzaj –

NOWSTERDAY: This CD is one of my own... Jack Gold-Molina reviewed it in “[All About Jazz – Seattle](#)” several years ago... here’s what he had to say:

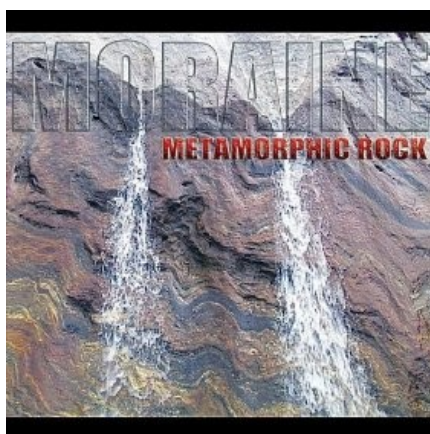
“Electronic beats, keys, organ, and synthesizer create hypnotic trance music at a medium tempo to open the disc with the track “Diagramming The Departure.” The rhythms become increasingly complex underlying electronic sounds that take the listener into a kind of surreal dream state. There is a feeling of being at ease but with

slight unrest—like something could happen akin to falling off the edge of the world. The feeling of edginess becomes agitation as the music progresses through straight ahead, albeit slightly complex, rhythms into the fourth tune and the music becomes less tense. Surrealism is more prevalent and the name of this tune, “African Landscapes,” makes me think of the tragedies taking place in Africa —extreme poverty, war and violence, AIDS, government corruption —as well as the beauty and all that Africa has given to the rest of the world...given of what hasn’t been taken forcibly. One thinks about how Africa’s current state reflects upon the west—historically westerners have caused their suffering, and western nations are being blamed for the world’s current violent state as well. The music continues, slow and surreal, colors in sound moving through a dark void like being deep inside a cave. The feeling of being on edge escalates almost into paranoia, a symptom of a larger problem. Echoes cause deep reflection, not of meaning, but of what has taken place in the world—what has gone before us, what is happening now, and one asks, “What about the future?” It is as blatantly clear as getting a speeding ticket. Metcalf and Vale know what they want to say musically and their driving surrealism leaves the listener with the sense that we, the human race, are accountable whether we can face it or not. Lyrical without words, their vision becomes increasingly clear, and with thoughtful listening it is painful to recognize one’s own ignorance and stupidity.”



Ion Zoo – VENUS LOOKS GOOD: Those in our readership who are more inclined towards more “earthly” pursuits may find this CD a bit unsettling... OTOH, most in our readership have, at one time or another, tasted the beauty of being a stranger in a strange land as part of an improvised set like this one. Just over an hour of great tunes like “[Storgaten](#)“, which takes you as close to Venus as you can get without a handy-dandy rocketship. Per the liner notes, every instant of the hour plus adventure was

on-the-fly, without any preconceived notions, discussions or deliberations... & I can tell you (from having done such myself a few years back), there’s nothing more pleasurable for artists than when it comes together as well as this one does. My particular favorite, though a tad short, was “[At The Post](#)“... wonderful swirling moments from vocalist Carol Sawyer, reed/percussionist Steve Bagnell, piano by Lisa Cay Miller & bass from Clyde Reed. Those inclined towards acoustic adventure will agree when I declare this MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED; “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.98. Get more information on [ION ZOO’s CD page](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Moraine – METAMORPHIC ROCK: It’s abundantly clear from the last couple of CD’s I’ve reviewed from Dennis Rea’s MORIANE adventures that when you put his guitar together with electric violin from Alicia DeJoie, baritone sax, flute & effects from James DeJoie, bass from Kevin Millard & drums from Stephen Cavit, you’ve got rock/jazz/prog that can’t be beat. & that’s especially true since this one was recorded live at the 2010 Nearfest... you can’t help but RAWK ALONG on tracks like “[Save The Yuppie Breeding Grounds](#)” – lol! You’ll have no DOUBT that things are kickin’ as you

jump/glide ‘cross th’ flo’ with “[Kuru](#)“... it’s tunes like this that make folks compare Moriane to Mahavishnu Orchestra! Stellar music that won’t (ever) be “put in it’s place”, since it’s “place” is to “replace” all the tired & cliched junk that’s on the market today. This exciting album gets my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at the [MOONJUNE page for this CD](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

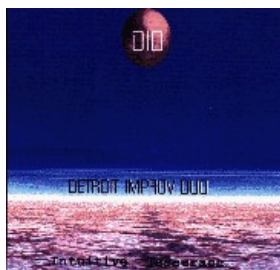
Silvano Monasterios – ROADS NOT

TAKEN: If you’ve been reading my reviews at



all over the last few issues, you've noted that I'm totally taken with Silvano's marvelous piano playing & style... & even if you haven't seen my raving about his music, when you listen to the opener, "[San Ruperto](#)", you'll know instantly why I've been so enchanted with his high-energy playing! If you'd rather observe while you listen, visit his page for some excellent [YOUTUBE vids](#), as well. Either way, what you'll realize is that this Venezuelan gent has jazz in his blood... if you need even more

proof, scope out the simple, yet highly attractive "[I Hope](#)"... in fact, that's what Silvano's playing really has to offer – a sense of wonder that leads to opportunity and possibility you might never have imagined before. Enjoy this MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED CD, then read my [INTERVIEW](#) with him in this issue (thanks for taking the time to chat with us, Silvano). "EQ" (energy quotient) rating is (again) right near the top, at 4.99. Get more information at [Silvano's site](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*



Detroit Impro Duo – INTUITIVE TESSERACT: I thought it might be interesting for you to read what the reviewers had to say about my own work – in this case with Jim Konen, of Pontiac, Michigan – this review was published in the (sadly now defunct) [SPLENDID e-zine](#) review, if you'd like to check the site out.

"Albums like this are bound to cause headaches among the jazzerati. Performed by Jim Konen (who switches between synthesizer and guitar) and Dick Metcalf (keyboards), these eight tracks were improvised and recorded directly to disc. On tracks like the eight-minute "Sine", the result sounds like some of the more intense sections of Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew*. On other pieces, such as "The Beat", the pair create funky guitar moments akin to John Scofield's work. What then, you ask, is the problem? The difficulty lies in the fact that the rhythm tracks are loops, and not the product of a living, breathing musician. The introduction of electronic instruments caused a fuss during the late '70s, with many critics claiming that such instruments relied more on technicians than technique. Clearly, this notion was dispelled, and electric groups like Medeski, Martin and Wood stand at the forefront of contemporary jazz.

Intuitive Tesseract, however, is something else. One of the defining themes of jazz is the interaction among the improvising players. While the original swing beat has been cast aside in favor of a more freeform palette, the central interplay between musicians has remained a constant. However, when the beat, long a key player in the construction of jazz tunes, loses the ability to respond to what goes on about it, is it still jazz? Whether or not the Duo sought to raise this question, this interesting album does exactly that.

While undisciplined moments such as "Inner Strength" lack sufficient impact to make the debate worthwhile, there are several strong tracks which readily foster further discussion. "The Fastrack" features manic piano *a la* McCoy Tyner's more far-out work, as well as a sparsely-played trumpet that recalls Davis. Since trumpet is not listed in the liner notes, I assume that it is in fact synthesized, although most listeners wouldn't notice. In fact, given Davis' penchant for electronic experimentation, I imagine he would approve of this electric mimicry.

The disc's closer, "Rongnine", returns to the sharp guitar work of "The Beat" for a fast and furious workout. Numbers such as these can only fall under the heading of jazz; despite the automated rhythms, the interplay between Konen and Metcalf remains the focus of the music.

The album's most ambitious track is "Oasis", in which the pair uses their format to push the boundaries of the genre. This piece uses a syncopated, clearly synthesized rhythm — the sort of thing you'd find on an Aphex Twin record — as its basis. Over the top of this, they layer gentle synthesizer chords and a relaxed guitar line. Here, the duo breaks new ground by using the interesting textures made available by their computerized rhythm track. This enables them to claim their own territory rather than reinventing existing traditions, and I hope they explore such ideas further in future releases.

Is this jazz? It depends on who you ask. Is it interesting? On the whole, yes — the Detroit Improv Duo have made a quite interesting disc."

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