

IMPROVIJAZZATION Nation

Issue # 93 REVIEWS

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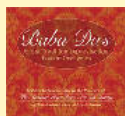
Citadel - D'ANTHOLOGIE 2 - CROSSES OR CROWNS: There is really only one way to listen to the kind of music that Rejyna Douglass-Whitman & her cohorts cook up in the witches brew-pot that is somewhat a "cross" (whoops, suggy pun-time) between medieval bard-istry, tinges of psychedelic jazz and (certainly) epic rock-ery that will have you wondering just what kinda' blue dot they were able to score - with HEADPHONES KRANKED to the TOP... since they have been conjuring up such musical spells for so long (nearly 30 years), there are definitely reminders of '60's-folk-type, albeit with far more sophistication and technical wizardry than back in those days. One of my favorite trax, "[Symphonic Prog Serpent](#)" soars wildly into that prog-rock zone that helped my high back in th' day... add to that the fact that many of the sounds (other than drums, vox, bass, hand percussion, "regular guitars" & mandolin) were created by Douglass-Whitman using her Graph Tech Godin Midi Guitar & Roland GR-22, & it's a quite amazing ride through the ether. The TOP cut (for my ears), however, was clearly "[R & R High Times](#)"... this thing will RIP to SHREDS any misguided thoughts you might have had about this being "just another folk-rock pretender to the throne"... but this track is one of my favorite tunes for all time, displaying a sheer love of playing and overwhelming the listener with a wall of music! I give this CD a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, & will be looking forward to anything else they want to send our way for review. Get more information at <http://www.facebook.com/citadelband?ref=mf> Rotcod Zzaj



Jake Hertzog - CHROMATOSPHERE: Shades of Robin Trower, in a certain sense, yet Jake clearly plays in his own style, and in a much more jazz-oriented vein... his guitar talent shines through each note, and you can easily tell he is in love with playing. His jazz composition skills are definitely more oriented to the 21st Century than many guitarists I listen to here and the songs sound far more upbeat and spacey than most... Hertzog's timing is flawless as well. He's joined (tracks 2, 4 & 6) by Michael Wolff & on the other cuts by Harvie S' electric & acoustic bass & Victor Jones on drums. If you want something that jumps with excitement, you'll definitely dig the funkiness of "[Back](#)" or the punchy drive of the opener, "[California Hills](#)". It was the svelte & slinky "[Oberon](#)" that captured my vote for favorite track, though... a very pleasant listening experience that clocks in at around 5:57 & is a perfect outro for the CD. Also very much enjoyed "[In Your Own Sweet Way](#)", but they can't all be favorites, eh? I'm highly impressed by the energy and vigor for playing Jake displays, & any jazz guitar fans out there will definitely agree with my assessment of this as being MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "best emerging young jazz guitarist". Get more information at www.jakehertzog.com Rotcod Zzaj



3-Play + - AMERICAN WALTZ: Josh Rosen's piano flawlessly executes the opener, "[American Waltz](#)", & will (through that tune) make you think you're not listening to a jazz set at all... BUT, when the quartet (Phil Grenadier on trumpet, Lello Molinari on bass, Marcello Pellitteri on drums & guests Mick Goodrick doing guitar & George Garzone on tenor sax) kick into cut 3, "[Happy Cramping](#)", you'll know you're in jazzland for a ride crammed with adventure. Of course you can tell (with titles like that) that 3-Play + don't take themselves too seriously... what they do offer (in a very uncompromising way) is an intensity that will keep you totally focused... Rosen's keyboards on "Cramping" are absolutely *killer*, never slowing down for an instant - this is not just my favorite cut on this album, it's one of the best piano-led pieces I've heard in many years! One drawback (in my mind, anyway) is that the samples I could find were all in FLASH - in other words, you can't capture them... just turn the "limiter" on, folks, so listeners can't rob your tracks, but still CAN link into them... even the .mp3's are hard to find the path for (though I did manage to do that). I still can't (really) complain, though, since the promoter sent me the full CD... it's just that it makes it much more convenient for listeners "in the market" for a band's music if they can "get" (meaning download) the sample. Anyway, it's the *music* we're supposed to be paying attention to here... if you want abandoned jazz roguery, you will be unable to do without the 6:22 minute "[Be A Battery](#)"... definitely another favorite! I'm highly impressed with this quartet & give them a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED... no doubt we'll be hearing much more from them in the future! Get more information at www.zigglezagglemusic.com Rotcod Zzaj



Baba Da's Fusion Orchestra + - BABA DA'S GREAT TRADITION IMPROVISATION FUSION ORCHESTRA: This CD came in a batch that our supremely accomplished friend John Wubbenhorst sent in quite sometime back... I got all of John's releases reviewed, but didn't get 'round to this one until now... that may have simply been because the track titles are listed as Improvisation 1, Improvisation 2, etc. Listening to it for the second or third time now, it's clear that music like this should never be overlooked - it deserves concentration and focus - in fact, I strongly recommend that for the first listen or two, you use headphones to absorb the full range of brightness the artists paint for your ears. The pieces are all played without a "plan", about as close to improvisation as you can get. There are 11 players listed, so I won't itemize them here, but you can see all the players (and listen to samples) here: <http://www.facingeast.com/babada/index.html> You will find your ears wrapped in beauty and devotion to passing that beauty on to all mankind, & that's all without any hype... they let the music speak for them to create a very pleasant and enlightening 50 (or so) minute listening experience! I give this one a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for anyone interested in music that fuses the spirit with life and the living thereof! Get more information at the link above. Rotcod Zzaj



Ben Averch - START AT THE BEGINNING: I reviewed Ben's CD "Washington State" (probably because that's where I am) in [issue #90](#), & am only just now getting 'round to this one (which logically probably should have been reviewed first, eh?). Didn't find places I could deep link to (though they may be out there), but you can hear stream samples of all the tracks [HERE](#). Real point, of course, is Ben's *music*, right? 15 tracks full of total vibrancy, in more of a rock vein than jazz, but suffering no detraction from that. His guitar skills are in total evidence, & (in fact) he plays all other instruments as well - a true one-man band... I got so excited about his playing, in fact, that I interviewed him in [issue #91](#). One of the goals he aspired to in that interview was to bring "real arena rock energy" to his playing... clearly, all that busking & gigging got him there - Averch's style is all-encompassing & not bogged down with any preconceived notions of what tunes are "supposed" to sound like. I'm once again highly impressed with the talent & energy he displays & declare this second CD we've reviewed from him to be MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. Get more information at <http://averch.com/listen.html> *Rotcod Zzaj*



Charles Evans - THE KING OF ALL INSTRUMENTS: This March 10, 2009 release features Charles' solo baritone sax on his fourth CD release as a leader (we've reviewed his work before, but primarily with the "Mostly Other People Do The Killing" CD's with Moppa Elliott). He certainly makes his case well for the (often neglected) baritone, with a stunning multi-layered 9-track set. If you're looking for "big band" sound, you probably won't be satisfied here, but if you want to hear what's in Evans soul, wrenched out through his gut & breathing apparatus, this will be the ticket! Is it jazz? Absolutely, but in a much "darker" setting than we often think of for such. When you listen to this one, make sure the lights are low & lock the door to your inner (listening) sanctum so no intrusions can happen... make sure your headphones are on, settle back with a nice glass of wine & close your eyes in anticipation of something you never would have anticipated. Charles digs down deep on the baritone & pulls out all the stops for you - I don't think I've ever heard more honest playing, except perhaps from some sets I've reviewed from David Liebman (one of Evans' heroes, by the way). This is "hard" jazz, not fit for the "smooth listener" group, but those dedicated to hearing the soul of the artist will agree that it's HIGHLY RECOMMENDED! Get more information at <http://charlesevansmusic.com/> *Rotcod Zzaj*



Paul Meyers, featuring Helio Alves & Donny McAslin - WORLD ON A STRING: Who *wouldn't* have the "world on a string" when listening to this excellent CD from Paul... this guy's bossa flavor is superb, yet his music expresses far more than (so many) other players who do acoustic Latin music, because he also knows what jazz fans will yearn for - absolutely some of the mellowest guitar talent I've heard! One of the most mellow and beautiful pieces I've heard in 20 years is "Plum" - and as indicated, it goes far beyond "just Latin"... totally intriguing, combining the adventure & sense of mystery of music from the Caribbean with jazz style that will stay in your mind for years to come. My favorite track on the album, though, was "Panama"... there is a definite swingin' blues feel, yet it still pushes a lot of very danceable energy out to the listener. This June 2009 release is a clear keeper for jazz fans of all stripes - I give it a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "best guitar jazz". Get more information [here!](#) *Rotcod Zzaj*



Curt Ramm-Dan Moretti-Bill Cunliffe - FOUNDATIONS: We've had the privilege & pleasure of reviewing music from all these gents (except Curt) in numerous issues (just do a search from our pages to see all the reviews they've been in), all in a very positive light. Ramm's trumpet is superb, Moretti's tenor/soprano sax work shines, & Bill's piano work is among the best we've heard in years on this great keeper CD! They are joined by bassist Marty Ballou & Marty Richards to form one of the most energetic groups you'll hear in 2009... that probably has a lot to do with the fact that these are all original pieces from the band members, but no matter the reason, this CD will stay in the top of the rotations for eons to come! Those who find funky organ a tasty treat will get right down & feast upon "K-Funk"... if you're more into *mellow*, you'll surely dig down into the bass-rich "Tired Corn", a Ramm/Cunliffe composition. My personal favorite from the entire album, though, was "Goin Nowhere Fast", with splendid piano lines, most solidly played, from Cunliffe... his fingers make that keyboard *talk to you!* All of these tunes will inspire you to get your tired blood *moving* & relive some of the glory from the "good jazz days" - this gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from these rejuvenated ears, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "most energetic jazz"! Get more information at wwwFOUNDATIONSjazz.com *Rotcod Zzaj*



Larry Slezak - NO WORRIES: Though this is our first listen to Larry's excellent sax work (tenor & soprano), it certainly won't be our last... an even dozen cuts (mostly covers, one original from Slezak) that are filled with his vibrant energy & talent. The first thing that comes to mind when listening to his reeds is "gutsy"... it's a take no prisoners approach that might fall flat in the hands of other sax players, but Slezak's execution & timing is so flawless & full of spirit that he pulls it off in absolute pro fashion! He's been playing for many years, first on the NYC scene, & in Houston since 1973, & as you listen, you'll wonder why this is his first CD... it's clear that with such monster abilities, one would certainly think he would have been at the top of the heap. I've been carrying this around on my .mp3 card since the end of April, & his playing has a real tendency to stick in your mind for days (weeks, even) at a time... yes, he's that great! Listen to the title track (his original) & you'll see what I mean... it's my favorite piece on the album, to be sure, featuring all 5 players in total "jump" mode... this one is an absolute smash! I also enjoyed "Distant Harmony" a great deal... sax/trumpet are superb & special guest Jose Miguel Yamal's B3 is excellent. I rate this as MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, & know that if you love sax-based jazz, this will be a favorite for years to come. Get more information from the [press kit!](#) *Rotcod Zzaj*



Copernicus - DISAPPEARANCE: I do know I reviewed vinyl from this mad poet (& now keyboardist) way, WAY back in the early days of this 'zine, but (unfortunately) it must have been one of those issues I never got digitized. I am just as impressed with his deep-throated poetic screamer now as I was years ago... the difference (methinks) is that these performances are much more musically oriented than when I first listened to him; a cast of players (about 13 of them, if I'm counting right) way too large in #'s to itemize here, but all devoted to making his poetry come through with crystal clarity! The opener, "12 Subatomic Particles", holds to the highest principles of experimental music, but without coming across as tawdry or second-rate performance... very well blended! My favorite piece (from both a musical and spoken-word perspective), though, is "Humanity Created the Illusion of Itself", which sounds like "WOO Revelator" on steroids, especially with Copernicus (aka Joseph Smalkowski) supreme vocal ranting! If you're a hardcore jazzoid with no tolerance for anything "different", you'll shut this down after the first few bars, but if you prefer *true adventure* in your musical experiences, this is the ticket. I give it a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, & tell you that if you're IN to spoken word - you've GOT to have this one! Get more information at www.coperniconline.net *Rotcod Zzaj*



Pat Huggins and A Damn Good Band - WRITE ON: Pat & I go way, WAY back, through several cotton patches (Alabama) & a Halloween show or two (he was Je-sus, I was Adolf... 'nuff said)... heck, we used to play V-ball together, right outside the pizza joint he played in (can't remember the name of it, but we sure had lots of fun over there). I hadn't heard from him for maybe 20 years or so, then "swoosh", he drops right outta' the sky (he's a 727 pilot now) with this kickin' CD full (12 cuts, plus 2 bonus tracks) of all original rockin' tunes! You can check 'em out on his [MY SPACE](#) page, or at www.pathuggins.com (be sure & tell him we sent you there)... it's a mix of some of the highest energy tunes you'll hear today, from a truly talented player who knows how ta' "hook" ya'... nope, it's not jazz, but th' level of spirit that this guy plays with, it'll still be totally infectious! Also very interesting because it was apparently recorded betwixt studios in Sweden & Muscle Shoals, Alabama... in addition to being a totally skilled lyricist & guitarist, Pat also has a great sense of humor, which shines through on cuts like "The Monkey-Spankin' Blues" & "Lobotomy"... you can listen to tracks from the CD at the [WRITE ON](#) page... I'll guarantee you some fun! For a change of pace with all original energy, this comes MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "true Americana"! *Rotcod Zzaj*



Craig Buhler - SKYKOMISH: If it's "large" jazz you're lookin' for, Craig's got it for you in spades on this grand CD... rather uniquely, at that... "pop" hits jazzified. What is SO unique about the arrangements on this is that they don't come across as "cheeze" at ALL, as do so many efforts like this do! One reason for that, I suspect, is that Buhler's plays in a "take no prisoners" style, yet maintains (totally) the flavor of the original... full of spirit and the kind of *jump* that will make even a dead man get on up & dance. If you're not sure you trust my word on that, you'd better take a listen to his masterful treatment of "[Eleanor Rigby](#)"... you'll hear what I'm talkin' about right away - absolutely *cool*, but not *sappy*, or "*smooth*" - in the least! For those readers in the same age zone as I am (baby boomers, indeed), this will be a genuine treat, but with the power group of players Craig has assembled here, I've no doubt this will be infectious for listeners all the way from 9 to 90. My definite FAVORITE track was (believe it or not) a Gordon Lightfoot tune called "[If You Could Read My Mind](#)" - so jam-packed full of emotional hooks that you'll listen through over & over again! An even dozen tunes that will thrill you to the marrow, & make you agree (without any doubt) that this is MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED! Get more information at <http://craigbuhler.com/> Rotcod Zzaj



Donald Malloy - SPIRITUALITY: Donald's debut is one of those musical experiences that takes a few spins to grasp it "concept-wise"... what makes it exciting, though, is the fact his all-original compositions weave (per the cut sheet) "different aspects of Spirit" as seen and perceived through all his life experiences - & that's often hard to execute without overdoing the aspects of one's life to such a degree that the musical talent is obscured. I can tell you that Malloy's skill and verve for playing make it totally seamless, & without any over-statement of one theme or another. His trumpet & flugelhorn do reflect some of the folks he's played with, such as Donald Byrd, but he states his case so clearly that you'll never think you're listening to an artist whose playing just "wants to be" another player... totally his OWN life energy shining through here. I'm really impressed... the group of folks he has assembled here (7 besides himself) know exactly what he wants in each piece, & spare no energy to take it there. Donald's playing is often out in front, but he seems just as comfortable letting the other instruments take lead as well. My favorite song on this one turned out to be "[Oshun](#)"... it pulls together all the players in a near-meditative state... wonderful piano/flute intro that spins off into call and response of universal quality. For something a bit more energetic, you'll also love "[Orunmila](#)"... this is one high-steppin' piece, & it really captures Malloy's most soulful moments! After a couple of listens, his communion with the holies will reach right out & wrap you in to his message... excellent jazz in honor of the deities of the Yoruba tribe (Orisha) that gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me! This is one horn player to keep your ears on - he will *rise*! Get more information at www.donaldmalloyjazz.com Rotcod Zzaj



Mia Vermillion - ALONE TOGETHER WITH THE BLUES: The promoter who sent me this debut CD from Ms. Vermillion knows what I like when it comes to female vocalists, particularly those who do jazzy blues... & though Mia's CD package is one of those "slim-liners", it bears out the old adage - "great things come in small packages". I've no *doubt* you'll be hearin' a WHOLE LOT MORE from Mia... she knows how to *belt* them old blues out, & the masterful crew of players she's assembled (far too large to itemize here) is right on the *money* with those slide guitars! If you're not sure you believe my words, just listen to her original, "[Love's Lost and Found](#)"... it's one of the MOST expressive tunes I've heard this year (both lyrically & musically)... superb! It certainly doesn't hurt that Mia is from my hometown (Olympia, Washington), but the blues she sings can only be performed by someone as masterful as she, no matter where they're from! My favorite cut is "[When I've Been Drinkin'](#)"... though I've been dry for about 9 years now, I could *feel* the sweat & th' throb in my noggin as she jumped on through this lil' kicker! If you just love well-played acoustic guitar, you'll fall in love with "[I'm Going To Copyright Your Kisses](#)", but you won't stop there - you'll find yourself immersed in her aura on all 9 of these gutsy tunes. I give this a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "best jazz/blues lady"! Get more information at www.miavermillion.com Rotcod Zzaj



Joan Crowe - IN THE KEY OF COMEDY: When I first reviewed Joan's music in [issue #74](#), I was more than amused - more like LMAO, no doubt... on this CD, when she introduces herself as "your chanteuse for the evening" & then spins off into "adjectives that begin with i" to describe her players (like irascible, irreverent, infamous, etc., etc.), you know Joan has no problem with humor in music. As to the "jazz side of things", she's got it DOW-un in clear-cut fashion: total laugh-a-minute throughout, but it doesn't denigrate the musical experience in any way, shape or form - she's got just as much *soul* as the most serious lady singer you'll ever hear. Though I couldn't find any .mp3 samples, there's a very cute vid for a song she calls "[I love a man with 6 feet of wood](#)" on YOUTUBE. The keyword for any production I've heard Ms. Crowe on is "fresh"... she's not only spontaneous, she's IN to the musical groove, so there's nothing tired about her music - at ALL. If you ever have a chance to catch a live show, you've just GOT to do that! This magical & funny CD will give you hours & hours of listening pleasure, along with plenty of smile time... this one comes MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me - absolute FUN! Get more information at www.joancrowe.com (& be sure to tell Joan I sent you)! Rotcod Zzaj

Jon Hemmersam with David Liebman, Rakalam Bob Moses, Michael Jefry Stevens, Ken Filiano - REMEMBERING THE FUTURE: There are certain CD's that just "hit the spot" for this reviewer... & it's not just because of the "names" Jon has assembled for this masterful and absorbing release; rather, it's because you know from the opening note that you are listening to *the future*! Whether these players are "remembering" it or creating it as it emerges from their souls matters little to me, but I know great creative jazz when it crosses my ears, and "Remembering The Future" is just such an album! Filiano's bass work has been reviewed here many times (click on their NAMES to read my previous reviews of them), but on the opener - "Love" - the creative spirit just flows out of Jon's guitar and all the other artists... unless you demand "pure form", meaning that you can't "hear" anything unless it follows a strict pattern, this 9:31 masterpiece will shine for you, & it won't leave your mem'ry anytime soon! The *balance* they achieve with each other is far removed from many such quintet groupings, and they will easily wrap you in the musical spell they are weaving - & that's just the FIRST TRACK... ha! ha! I could make individual artist comments (you know, pianist is superb, bassist rocks, all that kind of stuff), but there is no need to do so, because it's clear from note 1 to the parting note that this is a *unit*... they are not playing to outdo each other, they are playing to create *mutual* wonders! My favorite track was "Passion" (no .mp3's available yet, but I'm sure they'll be up soon), which features a too-WILD opener from Liebman's reeds, & a very improvised sounding 15:47 followup, with everyone given equal time and space. For listeners who aren't afraid to explore with the jazz gods, this CD is MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - for others, just tune to your local "smoove jazz" dial. EXCELLENT music! Rotcod Zzaj



True Age Media - GRINDSTONE REDUX: Our long-time pal Al Margolis sent a copy of this DVD created and assembled by Andrew Szava-Kovats... click on the DVD title above to purchase it. Excellent production, well recorded documentary views and opinions expressed by many of the artists who were central to getting the whole "underground home-taping" thing recognized as a (sort of) "movement"... folks that I know (& still correspond with fairly often) like Charles Rice Goff, Don Campau, Chris Phinney & Al Margolis, as well as others whose names I knew from the 'zines they all talk about has having helped promote the scene (Factsheet Five, Option, Sound Choice, etc.)... Jeff Chenault, Randy Greif, Mark Lane & Andrew himself. It's a full-scale 60 minute production jam-packed with pleasant mem'ries for the 100's (perhaps even 1000's) of us who were producing our own (D.I.Y.) music during those years... focus was mostly on the '70's, '80's & early '90's... emphasizing the years before the Internet and advanced digital technologies made it so much easier for folks (including many of us) to distribute our own music on much broader scales. The very next thing I hope to see from Szava-Kovats is a "sequel" that moves on into the digital age & aspects of home-producers... not so much from the standpoint of helping to "promote" any individual artist or label, but to make sure posterity knows that the "network" "Redux" talks about is still *most* "alive & well"! This is a SUPERB video experience, & I look for a lot more to come! Get more information at www.trueagemedia.com Rotcod Zzaj

more information by clicking on the DVD title, linked right into the site! I give it a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, as well as the "PICK" of the year for "most informative and entertaining DVD"! *Rotcod Zzaj*



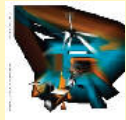
Mike Arroyo - TRANSITION: If "cool" is your keyword when it comes to jazz, you'll NEED to add Mike's stunning new CD to your collection... it features his excellent guitars, a whole host of other very talented players decidedly entrenched in Latino-influenced jazz & a *spirit* (I believe is) influenced by Mike's own personal "transition" (to read more about that), check out Mike's information at <http://mikearroyojazz.com/> It won't take long to guess accurately, though, when you see song titles like "[The Whisper of God](#)", or "[His Eye Is On The Sparrow](#)"... mighty mellow playing, & fully loaded with highly charged emotion - as one might expect. For flow and excellence, though, it's the opener, "[Street Jam](#)", that got my pick for favorite - ALL the players are right *on it*, & will have you gettin' up on your feet, partyin' on down! I'm highly impressed at my first listen to Arroyo's work, enough so that it gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED... you will be too, I'll guarantee it! *Rotcod Zzaj*



Volcano The Bear and La STPO - THE SHY VOLCANIC SOCIETY AT THE BEAR AND BIRD PARADE: With a title that long, you can easily tell that your experience will depend on your affinity for their particular blend of insanity as well as their skill for exploring sonic walks on distant planets in distant galaxies. The CD is split into two sets, VTB on one (cuts 1-5) & La STPO performing the other (tracks 6-9). While it isn't the kinda "chamber music" I would have played for my classically trained grandma, the La STPO portion comes closer to what I might have thought that would be. VTB cuts are full of adventurous sounds that challenge the listener to absorb, then interpret them for themselves. This isn't music for all listeners... you must have a true appreciation for sonic diversity and *want* to hear jungles full of hyenas, pumas & other creatures out to devour your aural appendages. For my part, I most thoroughly enjoyed what both acts perpetrated on my (already warped) brain & give the album a HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for all who want to hear *different!* Get more information & some samples [HERE!](#) *Rotcod Zzaj*



Rented Mule - X: There is only ONE way to listen to these kats - LOUD!!! I actually had a bit of a ruff time findin' information about the band... players were D.A. Jones, Dan Greenburg, Paul Rodgers, Jason Mescia, Pete McRae & Napoleon Black - & people, these dudes know how to purvey that FONK!!!! You can hear samples at their [MYSPEACE](#) page, & they're high enough quality to hip you to the fact that this band is GOIN' somewhere FAST! My enthusiasm for the music they're playing probably has something to do with the fact that (unless I'm reading things wrong), these are all ORIGINAL compositions... but it's also because they are one of the *tightest* groups I've listened to in 2009! The opener, "[Massapoag Jaunt](#)", is my favorite track - just bounces right on along. Another reason I'm diggin' on this band so much is that they've managed to combine one HECK of an "age range", if you will, & are very culturally diverse, as you'll see when you watch "[Feed The Ferals](#)" - it's the CD version you'll want to hear, though... excellent recording all the way through the album! I'm most highly impressed with this music/group & expect you'll be hearing much MORE from them... they get a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, as well as the "PICK" of this issue for "best red-hot funky jazz"! Lovin' this! *Rotcod Zzaj*



John Hollenbeck - eternal interlude: This is one of the more exciting "DDR" (digital download reviews) I've done yet this year... the announcement came to us from one of the promoters who has been encouraging artists to help save themselves the costs of mailing out CD's, & has begun putting out evermore announcements about such releases (right *on*, Ann)! Our most recent review of John's work was in [issue #92](#), though we've reviewed him many other times. His work here is what he terms as a "large ensemble" group, and it will just *stun* your ears... unfortunately, since it's not being released until mid-to-end August, 2009, there weren't any audio samples available for download yet... (*ed: I will come back here after they are up & link some in!*) Featured players are vocalist Theo Bleckmann, reedists Tony Malaby and Ellery Eskelin, pianist/keyboardist Gary Versace & bassist Kermit Driscoll... to say that they "play well together" would be the understatement of the year... the ensemble is astoundingly pleasurable to listen to, & while you couldn't pigeonhole the music in any way, it's awe-inspiring and full of life from the opening bar to the very last track (6 in all). If you love music with *soul* that will put you in a most desirable place - this is IT, folks... I give this our MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. Get more information or pre-order at [AMAZON!](#) *Rotcod Zzaj*



Don Campau - THE LIVING ARCHIVE: Yah, it "ain't yer" pa's "home-taper" scene" any more... but for those of us who *were* a part of that grand & glorious network (before there *were* any networks... no *internet*, no *Facebook*, no *cellphones*) this is a grand perspective from one of the gents who first put our tapes on-air! He's got written pieces about many of the 'zines that served as our "hub", if you will, "first-tape" descriptions from over 30 of the key players in the whole phenomenon & links out to products like "Cassette Mythos", Robin James book that attempted to capture the whole spirit (though from a librarian's perspective) in earlier days. Private correspondence with Don (& others) about this project indicates (to me, anyway) that future postings could help to "pull back together" some (or many) of the original tapers... let's hope so, anyway! This is a highly entertaining and informative project from one of the cornerstones of the "good old days", when excitement was in the air & analog was the preference! MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for anyone with an interest in this grand old experiment (that's still happening today). Get more information at <http://www.doncampau.com/livingarchive.htm> - & be sure to tell Don that Improvizazzation Nation sent you!! *Rotcod Zzaj*

Guideline for artists SUBMITTING to us: We do NOT generally review .mp3 files/sites. Being an active artist myself, though, I understand the need for the use of Internet sites as a "staging ground" for reviews! You are encouraged to email us your .mp3 links... we will visit the site/link, & if we like your energies, we will contact YOU! (We will NOT respond to followup inquiries about .mp3 files, though!!! p.s. If you EVER e-mail me .mp3 files, you will be BLACKLISTED on this site!!!)

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In This Issue: - IF you are the FIRST e-mail respondent to this note (to rotcod@hawaii.rr.com) - MAKE SURE your subject states ALEX CD), you will receive (free of charge) a copy of a superb jazz CD by Alex Kontorovich, titled "DEEP MINOR" (which was reviewed in our last issue). We will have (some) more freebies coming in future issues, so be sure & tell all your friends about us!

RETURN to Zzaj Productions [MAIN](#) page!

'k, alla' you hardcore D.I.Y'er's! We've added a D.I.Y. forum board! Simply click on the lil' button below to TELL US wot' you think...

