

TEMPORARY FAULT

PER ASPERA AD ASTRA, BUT ASTRA WEREN'T THERE.

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The Man Himself

MASSIMO RICCI
 "Max is a philosopher for our times!" (Clifford Allen). Seriously: taciturn (release-wise) multi-instrumentalist composer and improviser, music writer (Touching Extremes, Temporary Fault, Brain Dead Eternity, Paris Transatlantic, Bagatellen, The Squid's Ear). SPECIAL NOTE: I hereby declare, as a solemn promise, that I'LL

TUESDAY, 4 AUGUST 2009

More From Moonjune

One thing is for sure: [Leonardo Pavkovic's label](#) does not release records that a reviewer can easily dismiss with a couple of sentences and throw back in the heap. This stuff must be listened carefully before releasing any judgement; sometimes, precious diamonds might be found in the thickest mud.

SIMAKDIALOG – Demi Masa

Although this Indonesian outfit has arrived at the fifth album, *Demi Masa* represents my opening contact with their output. Led by Jakarta-based composer Riza Arshad, whose main instrumental shade should be individuated in the typical "ringing and shimmering" of a Fender Rhodes (he doubles on acoustic piano and analog synthesizers), the group tries to reach an acceptable balance between a multitude of elements generated by the superimposition of different geographic, cultural and musical roots in search of the Holy Grail of "fusion", that over-abused definition that critics have been sticking on everything from Miles Davis to the worst kind of Holiday Inn-tinged lounge music. Combining an obvious influence – that of the Balinese gamelan, its rhythmic drive informing a sizeable portion of these 70 minutes, with just a smidgen of "human inexactness" – with faint echoes from a not-so-remote path (John McLaughlin's Shakti to *In A Silent Way*, Oregon to Canterbury-hued passages – some keyboard parts made me think of Dave Stewart in National Health's most lyrical routes – and, somehow, even a little "pre-commercial era" Santana) the band manages to sound satisfyingly committed, though one does not necessarily share the enthusiastic hails to the "global-fusion masterpiece" quoted by the press blurb. But an enjoyable record, yes – definitely and without problems, especially if you're still looking back at the seventies with a pinch of homesickness.

COPERNICUS – Disappearance

The day after being knocked down by the Savoldelli/Sharp semi-fiasco, your gibbering host tried to regroup by inserting this record in the player. The first thing to come out from the speakers was a gravelly voice starting a series of half-theatrical, half-threatening declamatory statements surrounded by not-really-unconventional, rock-ish instrumental accompaniment. "Oh, no!" was my gut reaction. I'm not a lover of spoken word and thought that the 77 minutes would have been torture. I was dead wrong: patience was all this writer needed to acquaint himself with Copernicus (born as Joseph Smalkowski) a performance poet whose raspy timbre, with which the well-disposed listener gets confident as the minutes elapse, is a cross of Captain Beefheart and the most scathing version of Randy Newman. What he offers in *Disappearance* – convincingly, we'd have to say – is an unrelenting tirade, including dozens of variations on the basic theme, about this essential concept: nothing exists, everything is illusion. The universe itself, which in theory humans should become one with, does not subsist either – and of course the same beings are deluding themselves of actually living. The nucleus of Copernicus' biting dissertations revolves around the analysis of subatomic matter, theories which he exposes with the clarity of a lucid philosopher but also with the attitude of a visionary drunkard. Believe it or not, going on with the listening experience means that you get somewhat tangled in this man's prophetic mindset, and the pulsating, often scintillating background offered by the *superb* supporting band (which includes musical director Pierce Turner, Larry Kirwan, Mike Fazio, Bob Hoffnar, Raimundo Penaforte, Cesar Aragundi, Fred Parcels, Rob Thomas, Matty Fillou, Marvin Wright, George Rush, Thomas Hamlin and Mark Brotter – "bravo" to all!) is more and more emotional, explosive and involving with the passage of time, meshing free improvisation, blues and Mardi Gras jazz with extreme ease. Great record, surely not for everybody. A question remains: how come that I never heard of this man, not even by name, until yesterday? At times, gone forty-two years of sound exploration, acknowledging ignorance is quite depressing. In *music*, I mean. As far as people's illusions are concerned, this undesired informant is an out-and-out corporeal encyclopaedia.

Posted by MASSIMO RICCI at 11:50

0 comments:

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KNOWN AS "MYSPACE"
AND "FACEBOOK". The
same goes for each and
every "social" internet
group on the earth. If
you see "Massimo Ricci"
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ugly face in there, that's
not me. Please don't send
invitations, "Mr. X wants
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similar preschool items.
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