

Midwest Record

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03/08/13

CAFÉ PACIFIC

JEFFREY GIMBLE/Beyond Up High: What a load of talent on board for a new kid on the block from Texas that is a jazz vocalist with an affinity for Brazilian feeling jazz. A nice trip through the standards and classics with some detours into the neo-classic era (the 70s forward), you get Mark Winkler, Tamir Hendelmen, Bob Sheppard and others setting the table for this cat that sounds like something between Dave Frishberg and Winkler but brings his own brand of sass that undermines the hang dog look on the cover and the liner. Apparently making me eat my own worlds for being down on things that look too slick, this cat looks too dour for such a first call cocktail hour swinger. A solid bet for when your ears are bleating for something sophisticated but fun and lighthearted. Check it out.
2013

FANIA

ELEMENTS OF LIFE/Eclipse: This double cd sounds nothing like you would expect from something that is put out by Fania and headlined by Louie Vega with talents like Lisa Fischer, Cindy Mizelle and Ursula Rucker on board. Sounding heavily like a civil rights era, church basement production, this is a killer find for people who like those grand, rise up and sing kind of productions that carry a message with a great performance thrown in as a bonus. While certainly not for everyone, green types and one worlders will drive everyone in the indie coffee shop nuts raving about this until people start wondering when Britney Spears will really make her comeback. The kind of ethnic pride project that used to turn up on Qwest occasionally, it's a grand buffet thrown by pros for those with the ears that are ready for it.
8021

www.heimavis.com

HEY MAVIS/Honey Man: String Driven Thing and Pentangle had a meeting in Appalachia where they proceeded to get wasted on corn likker, kidnapped Don Dixon and convinced him they knew the real future of alternative----Appalachian America. Forsaking REM and Smithereens, Dixon stumbled into this crew that sound like they were plucked right from the back porch and sparks began to fly. Authentic folkies for the modern era, they write em as sweet as they sing em. Nicely avoiding the contemporary clichés rampant in the genre, this crew could single handedly ignite a whole new folk music scare. Killer stuff.

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IN FLIGHT

IN FLIGHT South of America: So, what do you do when you hit your golden years and don't want to sit around the house? Metaphorically, put the band back together. Cats that let life take them where it will find themselves sitting on the shore of their tomorrows looking west with their feet on the shore and get back to their jazz rock roots that were left behind decades ago. With echoes of Santana, Weather Report and other jazz rockers of the era flowing through these halls, they don't sound like a cover band or a bunch of frustrated amateurs but you can easily see them as a killer club band for adult tastes. With plenty of early 70s hippie vibe running through it all, they touch a chord with the lost decade/underwater mortgage crowd that can chase away the blues---until the next time their open their 401k recap. You know how it is.

www.kazyak.com

KAZYAK/See the Forest, See the Trees: I can almost see the leader of this crew calling up Neil Young and surprising him with the news Young is his father. The vocal is there, the sound of the various skins is there and the pre-shoe gaze shoe gaze is there. How can you not like this guy if you like Neil Young?

LOST CAUSE

CLAY SWAFFORD/Rooster: After a misspent youth backing up a boatload of contemporary blues greats, Swafford pushes his piano out front and center and grabs the spotlight for his grand whore house piano stomping. Even bringing Diunna Greenleaf along for some rollicking vocals that sound like they were recorded in a 1930s whorehouse parlor, this is mind blowing stuff. Your mom is hip enough that you don't have to lie to her that this is boogie woogie throwback stuff, she knows what your great grandmother did to get through the depression. This record sounds like taking highway 61 south and turning west at Storyville. This is what George Clinton was talking about when he said free your ass and your mind will follow. Great stuff and he pretty much makes all that racket himself. Anyone down with stripper/burlesque iconography that doesn't have this on their Ipod has their picture on Wikipedia next to Poseur. Hot stuff.
120

TAMES

RON OSWANSKI/December's Moon: A rising B3 player backed by John Abercrombie, John Patitucci and Tim Reis? Hmmm, what would you expect to come out of it? The disparate jazzbos come together to raise the roof with their own brand of joyful noise rooted in progressive jazz expressing themselves with a freedom they don't get from their paycheck gigs, unless ECM is writing the check. Showing the new generation comes to all genres eventually, this B3 player is more into ECM Jarrett than Jimmy Smith, and he isn't afraid to let it show. Wild stuff for wild ears that have been wondering where all the wild went. And this cat started out on accordion?!

2

VIZZTONE

LONG TALL DEB/Raise Your Hands: Wonder what Janis would have sounded like if she had satellite radio to use as a launch pad? Not exactly sure if Texan by way of Ohio Long Tall Deb is the answer, but this white gal blues steamroller's debut seems to have a lot of satellite radio in it's birthright and Deb knows how to put on a show without rolling off the rails---but you get the

idea. With almost a who's who of white boy blues on deck here, this is one smoking, sizzling auspicious debut that will send moldy figs running back to the groves while those raised on 50 Shades of Skinimax will be bowled over by the power and vigor rolling through these bytes. If you only know about the chitlin circuit and roadhouses from watching Animal House, trust me, you'll love the way belter rocks the strip mall. I've seen the future of white boy blues and this gal has the whole world in her hands. Hot stuff.
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FTC Blogger Disclosure: Hold on, we're working on something that doesn't sound lame.

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