

Mp3 Jonathan Best - Inside The Mad Linguist



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Defies genres but is something like "avant-garde boogiewoogie," both self-revealing and socially conscious, equally silly and serious, and unlike anything else one is likely to see around these parts. 16 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Traditions, JAZZ: Weird Jazz Details: Jonathan Best - singer/songwriter/keyboardist/percussionist/loopist Jonathan Best has been playing music around the world for over 20 years. He was taught the finer points of gospel music early in his career as he toured the Pentecostal churches of New York City and the south with The Elect Lady Evangelist Shirley Davis. His blues and R&B leanings also landed him gigs with bands such as The Drifters, South African singer Cosbie Mbele, the B-52s and Defunct. His odd sense of humor brought him together with the notorious Peter Stampfel (Holy Modal Rounders) for a number of albums and tours, culminating in the thankless job of producing and recording Stampfel's last album with the Bottlecaps "The Jig is Up". Thoroughly ensconced in the Downtown experimental music scene he also performed and recorded with various Latin bands, a synthesis which brought him together with David Byrne (Talking Heads) for a seven month world tour and a feature film. Jonathan has also done a lot of composing and arranging for albums and movies in his own recording studio. He composed, arranged and co-wrote the lyrics for Clarence Carter's 'I Got A Thing For You' included on Carter's "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" album and his "Greatest Hits" album, both of which remained on the Billboard R&B charts for several weeks. Jonathan is currently performing solo in an act where he brings all of his various musical talents to the stage and does not just perform, but creates music with the audience. With the aid of a looper, he records and layers, live on stage, rhythmic sounds made with such instruments as bicycle forks, a transistor radio, tooth brushes, hedge clippers and his cheeks. He then brings the audience and even the hall itself into the mix, adding seven part contrapuntal vocal harmonies and his inimitable piano playing, covering every style from

barrelhouse blues to salsa, all this done by one guy and an audience. What the press has to say about Mr. Best : "Imagine the intensity of Jerry Lee Lewis's piano playing with the deliberate onstage deliberations of Badly Drawn Boy and the avant-garde experiments of (insert favorite found-sound avant-garde artist here, I can't think of someone appropriate) and you've got an idea just how quirky and fascinating his performances are." -Tony Fletcher, iJamming "Any attempt to describe the music of Jonathan Best is bound to fall short. Equal parts Gospel tenor, boogie-woogie piano, and avant-garde sound collage, his music spans cultures and idioms with ease. It also makes startling use of sampled "loop" technology - and it's this element, perhaps more than any other, that has helped to establish Best as a local musician with a "must-see" live show." -Susan DeFreitas, Zene Magazine "A psychedelic Funk Freak" -Michael Herndon, Village Voice "Had a crowd of 100 mesmerized" -Bob Weinstein, New York Newsday "Piu un tastierista bravissimo" -di Giacomo Pellicciotti, la Repubblica, Milano, Italy "Takes some getting used to" -Eric Shepard, Rockland Journal News "Beats the sounds of Mozart" -F. Stoneback, EAR New Music Magazine "He was jammin' body slammin'" -Patterson College Beacon "Effective and highly engaging" -Robert Carlberg, Electronic Musician Jonathan Best's music defies genres but is something like "avant-garde boogie-woogie," both self-revealing and socially conscious, equally silly and serious, and unlike anything else one is likely to see around these parts. His emphasis on sampling, found items, audience involvement, and intimate settings creates a quasi-mystical experience, while his sheer honesty and genuine humility generate a sense of recognition and kinship. In short, Jonathan Best is a musical innovator who deploys his talents in a spirit of community and celebration, not for fame and commercialism as is often the case these days. -Randall Amster

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