

# Mp3 Trio Aab - Stranger Things Happen At C



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Scottish jazz- folk radiohead 10 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Fusion, JAZZ: World Fusion Details: Stranger Things Happen at C is Trio AAB's third album. This outing on the face of it represents a change of direction for the bass-less Scottish trio following their critically acclaimed and punk rock spiked 2nd release (Top 10 Jazz Albums of 2001 - The Guardian) and their eclectic folk, drum n bass, ECM and hip hop influenced debut (Jazz Album of the Year 1999 BBC Radio 3). Since their last recorded outing the band has been ripping up jazz festivals across Europe, as well as doing critically lauded, madcap deconstruction's of Broadway musicals in Edinburgh Jazz clubs. The music has continued to evolve because the increasing familiarity, and comfort and freedom in the bass-less format, that comes from a band playing together over an extended period. This album features the virtuoso traditional Celtic whistle player, Brian Finnegan, from the band Flook and Northern Ireland. Celtic music has always been a major influence on the band, and all of the musicians play with folk musicians on the integrated Scottish scene (including Karen Mathieson and Charlie MacKerron of Capercaillie, Martyn Bennett, Simon Thumire John McCusker). In fact their improvised folk tone poem 'Abstract' from Cold Fusion(Caber 004) , is reputedly played to students on the Newcastle University Traditional Music Degree Course, but the Celtic influences were more submerged in the second disc. This album has been recorded in the lead up to a overtly jazz/folk crossover CMN tour 'Double Helix' a double bill featuring the Annie Whitehead/Alistair Anderson band 'Northern Lights' and Trio AAB with Brian Finnegan, a musician who the band first met at a revolutionary "folk/jazz music melting pot" festival, BigFest, held in Newcastle in the late 90's. Finnegan immediately stood out as one of the few leading young traditional musicians who was a genuine improviser, whose technical command and speed of thought allowed him to genuinely react 'in the moment'. Although this Cd contains 5 tracks without Finnegan, including the searing funky bagpipe

opener "Ants Milk" and the impish Ornette inspired 'Stuff Swing' - both of which contain the uninhibited AAB trademarks of flowing group improvisation and pulsating groove - the band's centre of gravity, though conceptually constant, is here built around the quicksilver lightness of his flutes' and whistles' agility. Possibly as a result this album is mellower and lighter at heart than the previous CD, but contains all of the underlying elements that have earned Trio AAB recognition as "one of the most interesting contemporary small groups" The Guardian or "the most complete mix of originality and invention" The Times. This album, like a omnibus of short stories from around various worlds, beautifully captures the musician's individual voices, irreverent sense of fun, and avoidance of the cliché. This is not the more common type of jazz/folk collaboration. Here Finnegan is at the centre of the music making, playing his part like an eccentric bird in the 'magic realist' african tinged short story that is "The Clock", and weaving a beautiful and seamless web with the trio in the "soft on the outside/hard on the inside" drum n bass in 7 "Oddity". The most overtly Celtic opening to a tune, on Yet, then heads of somewhere else entirely, like a jazz-folk Radiohead. This album should confirm Trio AABs status as one of the most rigorously original and creative bands working in Jazz today. The Guardian Jazz CD of the Week Friday 21st February 2003 "Trio AAB may be one of the numerically smaller manifestations of the upsurge of Scottish jazz energy, but it is also one of the most audacious and spikily engaging. The partnership of the Bancroft brothers on saxes and drums is significant in the local scene's general profile-raising, since the two were founders of Edinburgh's Caber Records. Trio AAB (guitarist Kevin MacKenzie is the third regular member) skids between Scottish folk music, the melancholy defiance of John Coltrane and the sprightly melodic laterality of Ornette Coleman, but has given its music a rootsier feel on this session by admitting Brian Finnegan's flutes and whistles on half the tracks. The opener (Ant's Milk) is a typical AAB free-jazzy confection of Phil Bancroft's piper's skirl intertwined with Coltrane over MacKenzie's stuttery guitar lines and Tom Bancroft's bristling drumming. But the tracks featuring Finnegan engagingly widen the AAB horizon. MacKenzie is loose and eloquent over whooping wind sounds and hollow, bumpy, Celtic/Latin drumming on Station. Mournfully deliberate sax-jazz crosses jig-like music on Oddity, and mazelike Middle Eastern melody joins them on the zigzagging Yet. A band of real character on the up." John Fordham Scotsman CD Review Stranger Things Happen At C \*\*\*\*\* " TRIO AABs third disc marks another significant progression for a key band on the Scottish jazz scene. It contains many of their trademark qualities, including relentlessly inventive soloing, a joyous multiplicity of musical idioms, and a shifting, but always energised, rhythmic

pulse. Saxophonist Phil Bancroft, guitarist Kevin MacKenzie and drummer Tom Bancroft also explore some new avenues, and introduce a guest into the band for the first time. Flautist Brian Finnegan finds his own niche within their prodigious creative energy, and will feature with the trio on the Scottish leg of their Contemporary Music Network tour all this week." The Times CD reviews 4th March 2003 ".....But then no ones managed to make party music in 11/8 time yet. There are probably those whove tried, including the Scottish mavericks Trio AAB. Led by the saxophonist Phil Bancroft, this highly regarded unit also includes guitar and drums but no bass player, and thus takes a freewheeling approach to rhythmic matters. On Stranger Things Happen at C (Caber) the band create an unlikely but convincing sound world that spans Celtic folk to Ornette Coleman. In aid of the former, Brian Finnegan joins them for half the tracks on flutes or whistles. Trio AAB make quirky music that avoids self-conscious clever-dickery while sounding thoroughly individual." Top JazzWise April 2003 Stranger Things Happen At C "Like many others I was a huge fan of Trio AAB's 'Wherever I Lay My Home That's My Hat' with its myriad of knowing references from American minimalism to mock rock by way of Coltrane and ECM - it's subtlety resourcefulness and wit undoubtedly made it one of the strongest releases of 2001. Finding the band in even more exploratory mode 'Stranger Things Happen At C' sees them augmented to a quartet on half of the album's ten tracks an inspired collaboration with the brilliant Co. Armagh flute and whistle player Brian Finnegan (from the band Flook) whom the trio first met at Newcastle's BigFest in the late 90's. Bristling with invention- a palpable quirkiness and a refusal to imitate-the album possesses it's own distinctive voice- a rare thing indeed. Dispensing as ever with both the thick chording of the piano and the bottom end of the bass- the group's core sound - with the addition of Finnegan's high-octane and driving style-has a incredible clarity and edge to it. Idiosyncratic to the last-'Yet' begins in jig-time with sax and flute doubling up on a strangely contoured melody- two minutes in- a fast dissolve - and the listener is suddenly plunged into ambient free fall-as if Stockhausen had suddenly swept into the control room and taken over the control room and taken over proceedings. 'The Clock' - a crepuscular- African-inspired meditation-combines finely-wrought melody with equally fine improvisational flourishes (Finnegan's quotation of 'The Butlers of Glen Avenue' sits well here). Guitarist Kevin Mackenzie's melancholic 'Two' - with it's impassioned unison melody outburst at just over the two thirds point- closing this magnificent album on a surprisingly wistful note." Review MOJO April 2003 Stranger Things Happen At C "This bass-less trio have a light, skittish, quality and a surfeit of characterful wit. The tremendous virtuosity of

Phil Bancroft (saxes-sometimes sounding like bagpipes), Kevin Mackenzie (guitars) and Tom Bancroft (drums) is enhanced on half the album by the flutes and whistles of Brian Finnegan helping their rigorous, playful jazz/folk into the most natural sounding of fusions." musicweb.uk Caber 027 "As an out and out jazz fan that is not at all keen on fusion or world music, I was not expecting to like this album very much. My reservations however were soon overcome, these guys really do create interesting music and the jazz content is high. Scotland has produced many fine saxophone players Tommy Whittle, Gary Cox and Bobby Wellins spring to mind; but there have been many others. Phil Bancroft is a very worthy addition to that great lineage! Kevin Mackenzie is a sensitive guitar player with a real feeling for holding things together, as well as being an excellent soloist. Tom Bancroft looks after the percussion department well whether on drums or the more unusual bodhran, which produces an almost bass-like quality at times. Guest Brian Finnegan is a very accomplished flute player as well as a specialist on the Celtic whistle; he also possesses a nice jazz feel and is capable of first class improvisation. Each member of the regular trio has contributed one or more compositions to the album and most are refreshingly different, creating a range of moods or musical poems. Sundance, a Phil Bancroft original, is particularly effective with a theme statement from Tom and some interesting backings throughout. The sleeve note points out that in the title Stuff Swing, stuff is not used as a verb! The track does swing in parts and contains some other stuff as well. The Clock starts with Mackenzie playing a bass line on guitar and develops into another interesting performance. Trio AAB would make an interesting addition to any Jazz Festival programme, their work is unusual and interesting but not so far removed from Jazz, as we know it, to lose the audience. The fusion of Scottish Folk music and Jazz works better than most fusion experiments, perhaps it is the reason that Scotland produces so many fine jazz musicians. Overall the album is an interesting musical experience, not to be missed." Don Mather. Net Rhythms Review, net rhythms Caber 027 "Third CD from this Scottish trio of Phil Bancroft (saxes) Kevin MacKenzie (guitars) and Tom Bancroft (drums bodhran) who are joined on this outing by Flook's Brian Finnegan. While the first release (Cold Fusion) was more folk meets hip hop and the second release had a more punky edge this one veers off again with the folk influence more improvisational and the flute of Brian Finnegan playing a central role on the five tracks he is featured on. Underpinning the whole CD though is a flowing jazz groove which never lets you forget that this was created in Scotland. Very good." Jazz Review April 2003 Stranger Things Happen At C "Fresh from a recent CMN tour of England, Trio AAB try something a little different on this,

their third album. Known for post-modernist eclecticism and a puckish sense of humour, their earlier efforts sounded something like Trio Clusone colliding with Frisell/Lovano/Motian, whilst paying homage to Ornette's Prime Time. Their approach is rather more subdued on this release, largely due to the presence on five tracks of Celtic whistler Brian Finnegan. He foregrounds a strand of their music that was always present, if only a little submerged. The disc's lively opener 'Ant's Milk' , played by just the trio, perfectly illustrates that point, taking a folksy Scottish melodic motif, delivered forcefully on tenor, and placing it above a skittering drum 'n bass inspired rhythmic pattern, further adorned by MacKenzie's intricate harmolodic guitar webs. This is what the trio have built their burgeoning reputation on. 'Fin' perhaps gets closest to a true jazz/Celtic folk fusion, with MacKenzie switching to acoustic guitar and Tom Bancroft playing bodhran. Brother Phil's plaintive tenor makes no concessions to the genre, but the result is not dissimilar to some of the best music made by Tim Garland's Lammas. Unlike that group the focus is not exclusively Celtic. "The Clock" is more an african sketch (via Don Cherry) than a product of the Glens, though the similarity in timbre between the Irish whistle and traditional wood flutes is striking. The essential point is that Finnegan sounds at home in the tight knit unit of Trio AAB, and it never sounds like a forced attempt to 'do' some heritage. 'Stranger Things Happen At C' cleverly avoids a wholesale re-run of the trio's hitherto successful formula. More a sideways step, it won't disappoint existing fans precisely because it is such a logical extension of the trio's longstanding interest in their roots. With a record label that has a goal of documenting jazz particular to it's time and place, the Bancroft brothers succeed again."

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