

## Mp3 Jason Brody - To The Quick



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New York-based artist Jason Brody's sparse arrangements, tasty guitar work, and intense vocal performances bring to mind artists such as the Afghan Whigs, Jeff Buckley, Elliott Smith, Elvis Costello, and Fiona Apple. 10 MP3 Songs ROCK: Modern Rock, POP: Quirky Details: REVIEWS: "As I get older and slightly more sophisticated in my musical taste (only slightly), I find myself enjoying artists who are in no particular hurry. Jason Brody's *To the Quick*, the New York songwriter's first full-length album, meanders beautifully through 10 tracks of original material guided by Brody's absorbing arrangements, unique guitar and stirring vocals. The songs are well-crafted, often taking on a Radiohead air in terms of the guitar: pensive with a few surprises (dig the guitar solo on "To the Grave"--hard to believe a former lead guitarist with these chops can exercise such restraint). As a whole, the album is pretty mellow, but not without drama and rarely sleepy. The songs are all a little long, but only because Brody's deft songwriting skills means he needs a little more time to navigate the peaks and valleys of each song, many of which feature vocals that range from low and soft to soaring falsettos, all with an intimacy reminiscent of Elliot Smith. Even the weaker songs on the album sucked me in with their arcing choruses and bridges. The transitions within each song are smooth and seamless rather than a sudden crash of overdriven guitars and smashing toms and cymbals (until the last track where the band has earned the right to let loose a bit). Difficult to turn off for anyone who's really listening, *To the Quick* could just as easily make great background music while reading or building model airplanes. As a lyricist, Brody's talent lies more in his vocal prowess and strong sense of melody than his sometimes schmaltzy wordsmithery ( "O'er my bed you shimmer and circle the room, The grace of your art overpowers the gloom" ). But it doesn't really matter because he sings so beautifully. He's not shouting and straining the vocals like so many other young singers trying to hard to convince themselves they have a good voice.

Brody has it--he doesn't have to fool anybody, and that sense of modest confidence is projected throughout the album. The album sounds like a collaboration between guitarist and vocalist, yet Brody handles both duties, save a few extras. Few singer-songwriters of his talent can resist the urge hit the ground running too fast, tripping over themselves at the expense of the songs and the band itself. But Brody is slow and steady, letting the songs take shape without overpowering them with bludgeoning bravado and rock and roll hubris. On his website, Brody offers the best description of the album: "We tried not to overdo it, to leave the songs somewhat raw, naked, and instead of trying to make them fit into a particular mold or genre, we just did what each one called for." It may sound like typical self-conscious musician blather. But in this case, it's right on the money. Brody has got the goods, and he has produced an album that delivers them." --David Brown, 2 Walls Webzine, November 15, 2004 "The laid back grooves of Jason Brody's debut album carry his songs along like a flowing river, and Brody's interesting guitar playing pushes it out of normal singer/songwriter territory. Brody enlisted a host of musicians to add tasteful keys, from Kenny White's melancholy piano part on "Nightshade" to Goran Petrovic's ghostly piano playing on "Come to Life." On songs like "Boomerang," Petrovic coaxes atmospheric chords out of his Wurlitzer, adding emotion to Brody's sensitive songs. Brody and Co. are currently performing around his hometown of NYC, and judging from the quality songs on this disc, they should be playing to ever-growing crowds." --Robbie Gennet, Keyboard Magazine, November 2004 "I'm getting the best vocalists this month. Breathtakingly wonderful voices. This is the best of the best. Jason Brody sings in a breathy, soulful, yet manly seductive laid-back vibe, kind of like Elton John with several shots of whiskey. Or Rufus Wainwright with an unblinking, sharply-focused gaze. I'll declare my intentions right here and now: I want to marry Jason Brody's voice. I'm sure the rest of him is just as impulse-inducing, but let's be honest, it would be kind of hard to live up to that voice. It's too good. The hypnotic lure of the vocal is heightened by the eerie feel of the music. There's always something shadowy going on -- unsteady minor notes, unsettling images, unhappy endings, foreboding images. Yet his voice pours in and envelopes everything in warmth, and you drift through the haunted scenes. Brody begins "Angel on Earth" with a lovely image: O'er my bed you shimmer and circle the room The grace of your art overpowers the gloom And your dark and haunted eyes All the while telling me it'll be alright ... And in the end, she gets swept away by a current. If I remember correctly, he throws the word "choked" in there. It's a tragic scene, but alluring. You can't leave. You dissolve into it. But Brody's not constantly in mourning. My favorite track is

the so incredibly smooth jazz-soul of "Boomerang," with its gorgeous harmony on the chorus, and the dreamy, drifting "Circuitry," a song that proves that even when there's no percussion, you can feel a song's pulse. All of these songs live and breathe. They're cool and midnight blue and alive. He does twangy country-folk in "Nightshade" and more uptempo rock in "To the Grave." Wherever he roams, it works. This is a perfect album from first note to last. To the Quick is going everywhere with me for the next several months. My car, my day job, my living room, and in my bathroom so I can hear it while I'm soaking in the tub. For once, I'm not worried about the upstairs neighbors. I'm pretty sure they'll be asking me to turn it up." --Jennifer Layton, Indie-Music.com, November 6, 2004 "...You cannot escape the nuances in Brody's melancholy pieces that recall the sensibilities of Chris Martin and Thom Yorke on "Angel on Earth," "Come to Life" and "Circuitry," not to mention Sir Elton and Sir Paul..." --Kevin Mathews, Fufkin.com, September 2004 "An effete and sensitive Queens songster, with a falsetto sure to convince some of his soulfulness." --The Village Voice, May 5, 2004 BIOGRAPHY: Jason Brody was born in Queens, NY and raised primarily by his grandparents in a household where rock music was generally considered bohemian if not crude. During his early childhood, Jason studied classical piano to the delight of his family, but the older he got, the more he became infected with the music of his day. For his thirteenth birthday (after much begging) he was given his first guitar. Only a year or so after that, Jason took his first steps as a singer and songwriter. After heading off to pursue an English degree at Columbia University, Jason's early musical career began when he joined a number of working rock bands as a lead guitarist. As a member of several groups with diverse influences, Jason was able to further develop his own unique musical voice and to perform at some of New York City's most notable rock clubs, including Don Hill's, the Mercury Lounge, and Arlene's Grocery. However, as much as Jason relished these experiences, his own music eventually took over as a main priority. While Jason had been writing songs since his early days teaching himself the guitar, by now his musical style and intuition had clicked in such a way that he was hard-pressed to keep up with all of his ideas. He began demoing songs in his East Village apartment as quickly as he could finish them, foreseeing his solo debut. Jason's first album began to take shape and he decided to forgo the usual early solo performances and head straight for the studio. Co-produced with producer/engineer Bryan Martin (Rufus Wainwright, Zap Mama, Mark Eitzel), Brody's first full-length album-titled To the Quick-represents his unique sound and sensibility, which appeals to a wide range of listeners. "In the end, music is about evoking feeling, and I guess that's ultimately what I'm

after," Jason comments on his craft. "Mostly, I just make music that I would want to listen to, and I don't limit myself in terms of what that can be. On To the Quick, we tried not to overdo it, to leave the songs somewhat raw, naked, and instead of trying to make them fit into a particular mold or genre, we just did what each one called for." Jason Brody can now be seen performing at venues across New York City. Write to him at [jason@jasonbrody.com](mailto:jason@jasonbrody.com). He would love to hear from you.

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