

# Mp3 James Bazen - Stranger Things



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"Beneath the mild-mannered exteriors beats the soul of the Blakey-Silver tradition" - JazzTimes Feb. 1992 7 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Fusion, JAZZ: Smooth Jazz Details: AMG REVIEW: Native Floridian James Bazen arrived in Maryland via North Carolina, New Orleans, and Chicago before ending up among the environs of Washington, D.C. He started a booking agency cum record company called Music Unlimited to record his material. On this the initial release, Bazen relies principally on his own compositions, along with a piece by trumpet/flgelhorn player Mike Davis with a classic standard as the penultimate item on the program. Compositional skills are not wasted on Bazen. Some of the material recalls the hard-blowing days of the Blue Note/Prestige releases of the 1950s, such as the aptly named "Frenzy." On the other end of the spectrum, "Gentle Breeze" gets the smooth jazz treatment as Bazen takes up the horn of choice for that style, the soprano sax, working with the other mainstay of smooth, Mark Cook's synthesizer. Acoustic regains preeminence especially on a well-conceived Mike Davis-composed "Time Again." While Davis' mellow flgelhorn takes the lead, there's an intriguing bass solo by Ward Harris, where he startles by quoting from the Doris Day-made-popular "Secret Love." A lovely, flowing rendition of "I Thought About You" attracts, with Davis once more out in front as Cook's minimalist, unpretentious piano gets plenty of play. One of the more imaginative opuses is "Monks of the Castle," where Bazen has introduced some aspects of the Gregorian chant with Steve Larrance's drums carrying the chanting load as flute, recorder, and trumpet turn this early music into a modern 21st century swinging boppish restatement of Cantus and other ecclesiastical chants. Bazen's piece is as intense as those recitations from earlier times, but a lot more melodic. This CD is an excellent first-out-the-gate effort and is recommended. - Dave Nathan

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