

Mp3 John Ettinger - August Rain



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This instrumental disc features John Ettinger on violin, Todd Sickafoose (Ani DiFranco, Nels Cline) on upright bass, Art Hirahara on fender rhodes, and Scott Amendola (Madeleine Peyroux, Nels Cline Singers) on drums. ("Brilliant." --allaboutjazz.com) 7 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Weird Jazz, ROCK: Extended Jams Details: allaboutjazzreview (Publisher's pick of the week, 9.28.03): "Let's be honest. The best thing about what critics do is that we get the chance to listen to new music more or less constantly. So when something random falls out of the mailbox, we might just make a discovery. And have a chance to share it with the world, of course. And so with that selfish mindset a given, John Ettinger just scored a whole heap of points this evening. August Rain comes from San Francisco and the artist put together a pretty miserable press sheet, along with a "maybe later..." web page, so there wasn't much to do but guess. And to be honest, it's brilliant. These West Coasters have a thing about music hovering between funk, the jam, free jazz, and good solid swing, simultaneously doing it all (and them all) right. The secret in this case is John Ettinger, violinist and looper and effects man, sharing the stage with Fender Rhodes, acoustic bass, and drums. He has a way of popping in and out at opportune times to build a melody out of a groove, establish a specific mood, or carry on a burst of lyricism. The loops swirl all the time. "Lead A Normal Life" grows out of a simple drone to acquire echoing background whispers, a child-like bass melody, Fender Rhodes chords - and then finally Ettinger pops in personally to take swinging pizzicato lines away from the piano and turn them into a rallying point for a few '70s dream sequences. And then, more or less without warning, everyone falls off a cliff into a smouldering dirge, emerging into one more of those childhood discovery moments and some straight up group polyrhythms. That's one track, and you can guess how the rest work. Fortunately they do work, which is the frightening (and brilliant) thing about this music. You single out anyone from the band and he is more than competent. Drummer Scott Amendola

[Nels Cline Singers, T.J. Kirk, Charlie Hunter, Madeleine Peyroux] in particular digs deep enough into each groove, whether organized or loose, to almost singlehandedly determine its rhythmic course. Rhodes man Art Hirahara and bassist Todd Sickafoose [Ani DiFranco, Nels Cline] both hold their own in any case. You don't often bump into this sort of thing, which makes it all the better when it's unexpected. (There's a whole lot of bad unexpected music in the world, trust me.) So score twenty for John Ettinger and his team. August Rain is a dream state with enough of both fantasy and reality to leave you wondering whether it's actually happening. - Nils Jacobson, All About Jazz, September 2003

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