

Mp3 Hans Sturm - Fireflight



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Incandescent, multi-cultural, cross-genre swirl of Japanese koto and bass koto, African percussion, European voice, and sonorous double bass. 10 MP3 Songs WORLD: Asian, CLASSICAL: Contemporary

Details: Fireflight Mimmi Fulmer (soprano voice), Elizabeth Falconer (koto, bass koto), Dane Richeson (percussion), Les Thimmig (tenor saxophone, bass clarinet), Michael Kocour (piano) "Taking of the World by Sturm" "Bassist-composer Hans Sturm stirs up a torrent of creative virtuosity in his recent Innova release Fireflight: Sun Suite. The jazz/new music crossover album is permeated by the haunting sounds of Elizabeth Falconer's traditional and progressive koto playing, which is well nigh in the same league as Miya Masaoka's (in one stretch Falconer sounds remarkably like an oud). Mimmi Fulmer is the glowing and smoky soprano, and she sings wonderfully in consort with the innovative drummer Dane Richeson, who is comfortable with all manner of percussion East and West." Mark Alburger, Journal of 21st Century Music "At one moment it sounds like ancient tribal ritual music, and the next, it evokes scenes of natural phenomena - awe inspiring vistas and picturesque landscapes. This group paints pictures with sound that challenge the imagination and mind of the listener... a feast of musical textures and moods, and an imaginative approach to ensemble playing" Todd Coolman, Bass World I have frequently been inspired by a moving sunrise or sunset and was struck by the thought of what it might feel like to not just witness an event of such great beauty, but to be a physical part of it -- as if one could become part of the air and light. This thought inspired a series of poems and stories exploring the idea of becoming a disembodied part of the atmosphere, somehow one with the day. These explorations raised the thought of how magical the various parts of the day must have been to early human observers left unburdened by scientific explanations, the incandescent light bulb, and climate controlled environments. Words suggested sounds and ultimately led to the creation of the Sun Suite depicting a single solar cycle. The Sun Suite is

comprised of four sections; Sunrise, Daylight, Sunset, and Night which are in turn divided into a total of eight movements. The Sun Suite begins with an Invocation, starting softly with Tibetan Prayer Bowls and moving into a percussion and double bass improvisation that sets the mood for the composition. Invocation is followed by Habanero Sunrise. The Sunrise movement has a Latin American feel and likens the beginning of a hot day to sensuous images of the Sun both as a woman and as hot peppers. Sunrise segues into Fireflight, a movement featuring the bass koto, double bass and voice in a layered melody. The Fireflight movement attempts to impart sonic images of birds awakening in the early morning. Fireflight in turn segues into Daylight and Ellipse. These two short movements were written as duets for soprano and double bass. Sunset follows Ellipse and begins with an extended introduction featuring the Brazilian berimbau, then adding the double bass and finally the koto. This movement features four themes which are tossed about between the instruments and the voice in an effort to give the impression of the complex colorful air found at sunset. Starshower is an instrumental movement and features the clay udu drum along with koto and double bass. The final movement of the Sun Suite is the Night parable, a whimsical children's story about the moon which ends quite softly with the opening Latin vamp from Sunrise, completing the sun's cycle. If the Sun Suite is to be considered ethnic world music, then Smoke and Fire must be considered jazz inspired compositions. Written for soprano Mimmi Fulmer during the summer of 1996, Smoke and Fire do not share a unified story line in the same way as the Sun Suite. Smoke was composed after having written a comic fantasy about a fictional early 19th Century lady from high society who, in attempting to escape from an after dinner smoke filled male dominated living room, suddenly finds herself in the midst of a decidedly late 20th Century jazz club. After having a couple of drinks, she begins enjoy the atmosphere and even the smoke. The work opens with a 'hip recitative' for drums and voice disparaging the smoky 19th Century living room. The lady's entrance into the 20th Century jazz club coincides with the entrance of the bass and piano. The work features marvelous improvisations by Les Thimmig on saxophone and Mike Kocour on piano. The disjunct melody to Fire was originally used in an instrumental composition entitled Quasimodal. The images for Fire's lyrics were taken from a series of poems on fiery nightmares and reworked to fit the melody's rhyme scheme. Fire is a very high energy abstract piece inspired by the work of Roscoe Mitchell, Albert Ayler, and Cecil Taylor. I am extremely thankful to the talented artists who have contributed to this project. Since 1990 I have collaborated on numerous occasions with Elizabeth Falconer, a brilliant koto and bass koto player who

received her Shihan (Master's) license from the distinguished Sawai School in Tokyo. She always brings great enthusiasm and a fearless willingness to experiment to our musical explorations. She performs with great intensity and abandon throughout this recording. I have had the great pleasure of performing with percussionist Dane Richeson on countless occasions since 1984. Mr. Richeson is a Professor of Percussion at Lawrence Conservatory. Having studied in Ghana, Cuba, and Brazil, as well as being schooled in Western percussion, he is a truly remarkable virtuosic percussionist whose talents are seemingly limitless. He demonstrates his versatility on this recording, performing on such diverse instruments as frame drum, udu drum, barimbau, and drum set. We have performed together with many wonderful improvising musicians including Joan Wildman, Roscoe Mitchell, Stanley Jordan, Eddie Daniels, Carl Michel, Scott Fields and Bob Levy. I am extremely grateful to Dane for his powerful contributions to this music. I am likewise deeply indebted to soprano Mimmi Fulmer. Beyond having a marvelously flexible vocal instrument, she has a wonderfully innate sense of musical line and incredible listening skills. A Professor of Voice and Opera at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, she contributes several outstanding sensitive and graceful improvisations to the proceedings including her exceptional melismas during Sunrise and striking improvisations during Fireflight and Daylight. She also has my profound thanks for having been extremely supportive during the entire compositional and recording process, both personally and financially. I am honored to have had my former teachers Les Thimmig (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Michael Kocour (Northwestern University) agree to perform on Smoke and Fire. Mr. Thimmig's performance on Fire demonstrates why he is considered to be one of the world's finest bass clarinetists. Mr. Kocour was kind enough to take time from his busy studio and performing schedule, making a trip between dates with jazz legend James Moody, to contribute virtuosic performances, especially breathtaking is his dynamic improvisation on Fire. Thanks also to engineer Buzz Kemper and the staff at Smart Studios in Madison. Special thanks to the amazing Frank Fagnano for engineering the mix with assistance provided by Herb Hubel and Rolf Sturm. ***** Known for his stylistic versatility and virtuosity, double bassist Hans Sturm has performed as soloist, chamber, orchestral, jazz and improvisational musician throughout Europe, China, Japan, Brazil, and the United States. Sturm received his undergraduate and masters degrees from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and his doctorate from Northwestern University. He is currently an Associate Professor at Ball State University and Chair of the String Department. Sturm's major composition teachers have included

Joan Wildman, Steven Dembski, Les Thimmig, and Don Owens. His primary double bass teachers have been Anthony Bianco, Ferdinand Maresh, Richard Davis, and Jeff Bradetich. Sturm has appeared with many artists across the spectrum of jazz music including Eddie Daniels, Phil Woods, Randy Brecker, Roscoe Mitchell, and others. A frequent performer of new music, Sturm has toured with 'Fireflight' (soprano, Japanese koto and bass koto, double bass, and percussion) and 'Trinkle, Burkett, and Sturm' (trumpet, marimba and double bass) for more than ten years. As an orchestral bassist, he has served as principal bassist of several regional orchestras and toured Europe as a member of the American Sinfonietta. Recently Sturm has been a featured soloist at the Scottish Bass Trust's International Convention and the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh Scotland; the College Music Society International Conference in Kyoto, Japan; Encontro de instrumentistas in Joao Pessoa and Belo Horizonte, Brazil; the Biennial International Symposium on Arts and Technology in New London, Connecticut; International Society of Bassists Conventions in Richmond, Indianapolis, Iowa City, Houston, and Bloomington; and various jazz festivals including Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee and Madison. Sturm has contributed performances and compositions to more than twenty recordings with a wide range of artists including the Pro Arte String Quartet , soprano Mimmi Fulmer, jazz vocalist Jackie Allen, and synthesist/composer Joan Wildman. He has recorded for Red Mark, Music and Arts, CRI, Albany, Innova and Cadence among others. Sturm serves on the International Society of Bassists Board of Directors and is New Music Editor for the organization's journal 'Bass World'. He is on the faculty of the National High School Music Institute and his works for bass are published by Liben Music.

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