

## Mp3 Alex Domschot - Venusian Commute



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Guitarist Alex Domschot's inspired interplanetary journey - with bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Vic Stevens - is evenly split between compelling originals and unique treatments of classics by John Coltrane, Jim Hall, Gary McFarland, and Paul McCartney. 8 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Fusion, JAZZ: Traditional Jazz Combo Details: GUITARTISTRY From the epic, 11-minute opener, "Sad Princess," played on acoustic guitar and augmented by brooding string quartet, to an edgy, frantically paced cover of Jim Hall's "Two's Blues," a lyrical samba treatment of the Beatles' "Fool on the Hill" and the "All Blues"-y title track, the Seattle native and current New York resident cuts a wide stylistic swatch on this ambitious outing. Bassist Marc Johnson provides some inspired interplay with drummer Vic Stevens on an Ornette Coleman tribute ("Coal Man"), which features an explosive, metallic-edged electric guitar solo by Domschot, and also on a swinging rendition of John Coltrane's "Some Other Blues," which has Domschot dipping into Scofield mode on his solo. Johnson, whose deep-toned presence and impeccable time is felt profoundly throughout, delivers a dramatic bowed solo on the atmospheric, ECM-ish "Teachers." He also skillfully weaves beautiful contrapuntal lines around Domschot's guitar on the delicate Gary McFarland composition, "Gary's Theme." Great ideas and great chemistry. -Bill Milkowski - Jazz Times ...Domschot is a highly credentialed musician and composer with an educational resume and list of performing credits as long as his arm. His release, "Venusian Commute", co-produced by drummer, Vic Stevens, is at once a testimony to his exquisite musicianship and a statement of uncommon sensitivity in addressing contemporary jazz. Building on a core guitar trio, Domschot alternates between the nylon string guitar and what might possibly be a Venusian Stratocaster (pre CBS, of course). Comparisons are inevitable. I am reminded of the fluidity of Frank Gambale and the esoteric, electronic touch of Allan Holdsworth. Domschot's use of a mini string section has a thoughtfulness and elegance evocative of Claus Ogerman.

Here, I will refrain from making any further references to likeness and let the music speak for itself. The CD opens with the very beautiful Domschot composition, Sad Princess, a meditative piece featuring the cello of Warren Samples, nylon string guitar work by Domschot, and underpinned by Stevens hypnotic ostinato cymbal. Bassist Marc Johnson intros the Coltrane composition, Some Other Blues". Domschot plays the head and takes off on a free-wheeling duet with the drums. The trio wraps it up, and to aptly quote the disembodied voice at the end of the cut: That ones got some snarl in it. Andy Lalasis guests on bass for a rarefied telling of Jim Halls composition, Twos Blues. Little concession is made here to commercialism. Garys Theme (Gary McFarland) takes us back to a contemplative state before lightly floating into time. Coal Man is dedicated to Ornette Colman and transitions effortlessly from ballad to swing and some virtuoso playing by the trio. Check out Domschots burning guitar work. A fine bass solo is turned in by Johnson. The title cut, Venusian Commute, is next and surprisingly turns out to be an interstellar mutation of the well-traveled Earth blues. No freeloaders allowed on this trip. Also penned by Domschot is Teachers, which opens with ethereal guitar pads layered over lyrical pizzicato bass lines by Johnson - who then picks up the bow to very good effect. Some great drum stuff by Stevens. The album wraps up with a tune by Lennon-McCartney. Fool on the Hill might be here to give some faint-of-heart program director a lifesaver to grab on to. Kathy Rids imaginative cover design is a real treat; and for those of you with a desire to navigate your way around Venus, there is included a handy tube map. -Tom Adams - Record Breeze ...a mix of classics and originals by NY guitarist Alex Domschot that's more wide-ranging than spacey...Domschot initially adopts a deferential pose by showcasing Warren Samples' lyrical cello during the eleven-minute opener "Sad Princess," but generally shifts the focus to himself thereafter. Domschot makes a rare acoustic showing on the opener too, with his silken sound caressed by the lush backdrop of a chamber string orchestra and the understated support of (Marc) Johnson and drummer Vic Stevens...The trio literally burns through Jim Hall's "Two's Blues" (Andy Lalasis occupying the bass chair) and the Ornette tribute "Coal Man" (Domschot's sound at times simulating a guitar synth), and aggressively attacks Coltrane's "Some Other Blues" with Domschot dropping fleet angular runs and a bluesy, biting twang that can't help but recall Scofield (whose influence also presides over the "All Blues"-styled title piece). The album has its share of quieter, impressionistic moments too, with Domschot waxing reflectively throughout the delicate "Gary's Theme" and Johnson bowing on the meditative "Teachers"; the album even includes a samba-like treatment of The Beatles' "Fool on the Hill"

...'enhancing the jazz repertoire with quality sounds, a goal handsomely accomplished. - Signal to Noise / Textura.org

An imaginative, worthwhile release, "Venusian Commute" features a formidable trio in a variety of settings... [On "Sad Princess"], Domschot's acoustic guitar phrases are interwoven with evocative, brooding string arrangements and spurred gently along by Stevens' staccatoed cymbal rappings...the group settles into a more straightforward jazz mode with brilliant covers of John Coltrane's "Some Other Blues" and Jim Hall's "Two's Blues"...these two tracks in particular are brimming with intuitive communication and creative energy. On "Some Other Blues," Johnson's bass purrs like a motor driving the well-oiled machine, while "Two's Blues" finds Stevens in the limelight, setting a furious percussive pace. "Coal Man," a tribute to Ornette, finally places Domschot's guitar theatrics on full display, particularly during a electric solo...the song is shot full of ideas connected in an angular and blistering format that more than upholds the spirit of its namesake. Sandwiching "Coal Man" are two songs, "Gary's Theme" (written by Gary McFarland) and "Venusian Commute," which provide a softer dynamic to the eclecticism at hand. This does little to prepare the listener for the epiphany to come on the dramatic culmination of the album, "Teachers." Johnson begins by eking out a melody over the back-lit, reverb-drenched guitar chords before yielding to deeply etched, foreboding cello intonations. Along with Johnson's eventual return to the proceedings, Stevens bursts forth to bash the living tar out of his drum set, enhancing the dramatic effect of the piece. It's little wonder that even after the comparatively low-key cover of the Beatles' "Fool on the Hill" (which features perhaps Domschot's most lyrical playing therein) to close the album, "Teachers" ends up registering as the most memorable component of the disc once it has stopped spinning. Besides showcasing first-rate musicianship all around, the strongest case for "Venusian Commute" can be made by this, the best example of Domschot's willingness to take chances and not rein himself or his considerable breadth of musical ideas in by adhering to a singular form. -David Hewitt - jazzreview.com

Much of this set occurs in soft focus, with the trio playing in a kind of charged haze. The sound is gorgeous at times, as the players mostly find introspective grooves. Still, the experimental moments are pretty challenging. Domschot's tone is steely and oddly memorable.

-Philadelphia Inquirer ...opens with 'Sad Princess,' an impressionistic tone poem full of gentle lyricism in the tradition of past Metheny and Oregon, amply aided by a small string section and Warren Samples' sumptuous guest cello...an atmospheric, floating interplay that soothes the senses. -Cadence

Through all tracks, Domschot takes the listener on a musical journey, starting from the lyrical ways of Sad

Princess....Garys Theme, reveals extraordinary Domschot soloing... Venusian Commute opens softly with tones and solos of the individual idiosyncrasies of the players shining abroad, giving color schemes available to all listeners. Vic Stevens keeps us in awe on every track, but particularly on Teachers", which is a masterpiece. The music carries great intensity and energy on Coltrane's Some Other Blues" and Jim Hall's Twos Blues." Domschot's arrangements are creative and filled with different intonations and attacks. "Venusian Commute" is a wonderful accomplishment, gathering classic and jazz with original and lyrical sounds. -Dr. Ana Isabel Ordonez - Jazz Review It was an evening of guitar extravaganza...Domschot is destined for a paramount role in the music world. -The Sun Improvisation is Alexs forte. He doesnt discard traditional musical structures but attempts to transcend them - the result being an original musical entity. -Guitar Player Domschot responds with some deft impressionistic touches to help set the mood...this is music without any hyphens. -downbeat ...displayed a mastery of sound, style and craft...Mr Domschot is a sonic shape-shifter. -Guardian

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