

Mp3 Parallel View - Rocktronica



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Electronica fused with rock guitar and world music from "SIMS Composer, Kirk Casey 10 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Techno, WORLD: World Fusion Details: Not many musicians can say that they opened for the Grateful Dead ... at a high school gig. But Kirk Casey, the guitarist, composer, arranger and founder of TayMusic.net, not only shared a bill with Jerry Garcia and the gang, but he wasn't even old enough to be in high school himself when it happened. It was 1969, and Casey, who was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, was attending junior high school in the East Bay town of Moraga. Having played guitar, sort of, since fashioning one together out of plywood and kite strings at age nine, he was in a band called Velvet Hammer when he was in seventh grade. The band got a gig at Campolindo High School. "I remember, our drummer had to drive!" says Casey. The engagement, he adds, is actually listed in a published log of Dead concerts. The bands played in the school gym. Later on, the Velvet Hammer also opened for a just-getting-noticed Santana Blues Band at Campolindo. No wonder, then, that Casey feels so strongly about the connection between music and schools, a connection that's a driving force behind his starting up TayMusic.net. After graduating from Campolindo High himself, Casey studied music and composition at two Bay Area colleges, learned Cuban classical guitar, and developed a strong interest in world music and jazz. He then studied with Miles Davis guitarist Dave Cramer and segued into a career as a guitarist in various rock fusion bands and as a session player, working with members of Journey, Montrose, Santana, Tower of Power, and others. He slid into record production, scouting musical talent and taking them into recording studios. His recordings included three albums now available through TayMusic.net: Ten Soundscapes, Lazy River, and Isikojam. As he honed his writing, arranging, and production skills, Casey found work making music for commercials, for soundtracks and, beginning in 1999, computer and video games. A friend who worked for an electronic game company hired him to

compose and produce music for "Sim City 3000," and Casey became a familiar musician around town. But producing sounds for computer games is a challenge, he says. "It's the oddest thing I've ever come across. Electronica music these days doesn't have choruses or bridges. It's loop-oriented. For a game, you have to have some emotion-but it can't be upsetting. So you can't have a melody or a musical statement. It's very minimalist." On the other hand, Casey can also improvise. "Game music lets you think outside the box. Can you mix reggae with yodeling? Things blend, and you wouldn't believe what you can do musically." But not everything fit into the game environment-and that resulted in another Casey album, *Parallel View*-and his new label. "Every year, after doing another batch of games, you come away with a good quantity of music that didn't work for the games, but it's good music. And I'd say, 'I've got to put it out!'" In his studio in Emeryville, near Oakland, he met fellow tenant Tim Gorman. As their friendship grew, so did Casey's idea for a record label that would grow online and evolve, hopefully, into a vehicle for musical education. Casey seems committed to making TayMusica label not only for spreading music, but also "to educate younger players." After all, he once was one himself. You could look it up.

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