

## Mp3 Katahdin's Edge - The Ridge



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Progressive jazz that rocks. Katahdin's Edge pushes the traditions of jazz to the edge. "The adventurousness is contagious. Katahdin's Edge is out to play on The Ridge. 9 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Acid Jazz, ROCK: Jam-band Details: With their debut Step Away, Katahdin's Edge was celebrated as a roguish jazz piano trio goading a languid standard into confrontation. Roots intact, they produced funk- and rock-inspired grooves with cunning licks and intrepid meter sampling. The Ridge, their latest release available in May 2006, evokes the same adventurous spirit while challenging the equilibrium of tradition and innovation they established two years ago. The Ridge is where simple and evocative contends with infinite possibility, where composer and pianist Willie Myette unravels a new voice in the charged exchange between himself, bassist John Funkhouser, and drummer Mike Connors. A fourth voice emerges in disquieting sounds: a cool whistle like knives sharpening, a jarring squeal like rewinding tape on a reel on Glad You Called, a strange chanting counterpart to the bass on the title track. The group marries audio effects like looping and distortion with the kinetic meter variations, aggressive improvisation, and haunting melodies that first established Katahdin's Edge as a trio of depth and drama. From the buoyant melody that launches Glad You Called through the songs two mood shifts, serpentine sound effects break the surface; they mystify at first then unleash a rising and leaping crescendo. The Path, rock ballad apparent, grows an understated melodic seed in two measured shoots that unfurl, rolling and sprightly, before a satisfying return to the source. But the understated must eventually yield to vigor, and so, the title track opens with rhythmic pluck then lurches into thematic leapfrog until a penetrating chant unites the trio in an elevating, captivating jaunt. Eerie distortions of staccato tapping and of a slide introduced to piano strings confirm a fresh pulse. The adventurousness is contagious. Katahdin's Edge is out to play on The Ridge. They're charged with rock energy akin to Bad Plus and are

agile at cracking thematic and rhythmic nuts. Like Brad Mehldau and E.S.T., they optimize the arsenal of a trio with pioneering esprit de corps. Technological voicing has evolved their sound while Myettes compositions remain assured and melodically sophisticated. A Berklee College of Music graduate, Myette departed Boston for Providence in 1996, created a unique instructional method for jazz piano, founded JazzKids, and published about a dozen books, all aimed at teaching jazz and improvisation to children. Old friends Myette and Connors never stopped performing together since their college days. Connors has also shared the stage with Joe Hunt and Alan Dawson, and Funkhouser, a former student of the New England Conservatory, teaches at Berklee and has toured internationally with his own band, FunkHouse. The trio converged in 2004 to incite an alchemic flash. Step Away was released in the same year, and was touted as energetic, listener-friendly progressivism, avant-garde jazz that could satisfy an eclectic crowd. No matter how Katahdins Edge evolves, no matter how far-out their exploits are on The Ridge, its apparent that the groups mission grounds their music with uncanny authenticity.

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