

Mp3 Zuela - Evolve



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Instrumental grooves with Caribbean, African, Latin, Indian, R&B, Celtic, and Arabic influences 13 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Beat, URBAN/R&B: Contemporary urban Details: What is ZUELA? It is a dream come true. Guitarist, composer, and world music veteran Barry Hyman (cdbaby.com/cd/barryhyman2, cdbaby.com/cd/naturalh, cdbaby.com/cd/kinghappy, cdbaby.com/cd/naturalh2, windinthehills.blogspot.com) had a dream. There had to be a way to live way out in the country and still have a really first-rate world beat dance band. Hed been in tight, sophisticated, percussion-heavy bands before, in New York and San Francisco, but out here in the foothills of the Free Republic of Vermont, where there are no venues, no people, no money, no gigs, no musicians, nothing but trees and rocks? So Hyman would putter around in his organic garden, musing, and play lonely solo guitar gigs wishing he had a bass player and drummer who could switch from reggae to raga at the drop of a hat. Then he met Lyle Somers. Hyman was playing a house concert with a band, and when they took a break he heard a lively percussion groove going full tilt in the back of the house. Surprised and slightly annoyed that someone would be cranking up recorded music in a back room while his band was performing live in the front room, he went to investigate. And what did he find? Seven year-old Lyle, all by himself, drumming up a storm on his djembe! Thats when the dream started to come true. A little more than five years later this cd was recorded, with Lyle, a seasoned and mature thirteen, playing drums. The alto sax player, Jacob Goldstone, the tenor player, Dylan Gray, and the guest artist who sits in on keyboards, Nick Hetko, were all just fourteen. The second guitarist, whose playing is almost indistinguishable from Hymans, is Lucas Sconzo, age 15. (The bass player, Jared Carrozza, is a relative old timer at 23, and Hyman wont reveal his age other than to say, I thought I was old in 1967!) So what is Barry Hymans secret? How did he get this group of extremely young players to be able to switch so gracefully from Afropop to jazz, from

Arabic to Latin, from Chicago blues to Jamaican reggae? There's even an Indian-style raga, complete with sitar and tamboura, on this cd! One thing I really believe is that it is best to give musicians as little guidance as possible on each tune, and not over-rehearse, Hyman says. The more instructions and commands and well-meaning advice you give a creative musician, the more they worry about trying to remember it all, and the worse they play. My secret is to just turn them loose: here's the scale, here's the chord change, now go. The less you have to remember, the more you can concentrate on listening and playing your best. Hyman's compositions on this cd are all instrumental, so there is no singing and no lyrics to complicate matters. Lyrics activate different areas of the brain: the left brain verbal centers, and distract people from paying attention to the music, he says. And the basic arrangements are remarkably simple: sometimes just two chords. I feel that my main job as a bandleader is to keep everybody comfortable. If the musicians are relaxed and having fun, and the charts are loose enough so that no one is constrained by having a million things to remember, then the magic can start to percolate. And percolate it does! The dream really has come true. Every tune on the cd has a life of its own, with each stirring up a different flavor of magic. We asked Hyman if he would do anything different next time. My only regret is that this band is growing so fast, we already (two months later) sound better than we did when the cd was recorded. So if you like *Evolve*, then you'll have to take a trip up to the headwaters of the Owl Kill, in the shadow of the Taconic Mountains, and see ZUELA live. As Hyman said in a lyric to one of his songs (written in 1972), "You know if you want you can find me by the music coming down from the hills..." Here is a review of a ZUELA performance from the 6/15/06 Bennington Banner: Evolution was seen at work at Hubbard Hall BEN RUNNELS, Special to the Banner Thursday, June 15 CAMBRIDGE Local dance band Zuela rocked Hubbard Hall in Cambridge last Friday, warming the rainy evening and bringing the creative spirit to the town. Zuela's appearance at Hubbard Hall was hot on the heels of their new CD, "Evolve," recorded in February in North Adams. Zuela consists of four young musicians, aged 13 to 23, and guitarist Barry Hyman, who describes himself as "over the hill." Hyman, a veteran of the local music scene, is the organizational guru of Zuela. Most of the songs Zuela performs are composed by Hyman, and are built to exhibit improvisation among band members. Although the songs on "Evolve" never stretch past the five-minute mark, Zuela extends the numbers while playing live. Hyman says the band remains sensitive to how the crowd is receiving the music, and caters to their energy. "The arrangements are open ended; they're just conducted," he said. "We go until I signal the ending. So we

stretch them if people are dancing." Attendance Friday night was slight, but those who were there accepted Zuela's offerings gladly; a few danced in the aisles and in the rear. A few passing pedestrians wandered in from the sidewalks, curious of the sounds wafting out from Hubbard Hall's open doors. By the end of the evening, Zuela had nearly every child in the room up front dancing circles around each other. Hubbard Hall, which began its history as an opera house in 1878, has the majestic aura of a well-worn theater of the arts. Landscape paintings cover the wall behind the stage, and elaborate carvings and paintings border the stage. Zuela's presence contributed to the glow of Hubbard Hall on Friday night; ethnic percussion instruments lined the front of the stage, and the band's equipment stood ready to be picked up and played. The band opened with a reggae tune, with Hyman coaxing silky lead licks from his guitar while guitarist Lucas Sconzo, who was sporting a red bath robe, chopped powerful rhythm chords. "Bottom Heavy," a tune from the new record, was Zuela's second offering, and included alto saxophonist Jacob Goldstone conjuring soundscapes of smooth melody that drifted over the band's brew. Zuela is equally comfortable in many musical situations, touching on reggae, blues, and Eastern influences. Guest keyboardist Nick Hetko, 14, sat in for a few songs, spinning his jazzy melodies and adding support for the rest of the band. Shining during his solos, Hetko's swirling contribution propelled Hyman's leads to new creative heights. Barry Hyman has his hands full on stage; his role in Zuela is unique in that not only is he a musician, but a conductor, pointing to the musicians when their turn to solo arrives, and flashing them a thumbs up when he feels they are finished. He will then either take a solo himself, or point to another soloist to take it away. During a few of the tunes, Hyman picked up a harmonica and made his way around the existing melodies. At one point, the musicians set their guitars and horn down, grabbed percussion instruments, and launched into a drum solo. Drummer Lyle Somers beat a tribal beat on his toms as Sconzo, cowbell in hand, descended from the stage and danced wildly around the room, bathrobe twirling and long black hair flying. Zuela ended the night with a bang; although the last song was tinged with slight fatigue, the musicians poured out their last bits of energy and made one last bold musical statement. The number had a driving bass line, pounded out gracefully by Jared Carrozza, and a spinning wah guitar backdrop set into motion by Sconzo, who had earlier exchanged his bathrobe for a green mechanic's jumpsuit. As the grateful crowd filtered out into the night, Barry Hyman stood by the door and thanked the attendees for coming. The musicians mingled with friends and family, glowing from their musical success. With Zuela, Hyman is providing a valuable service to the Cambridge

community, not only by providing an opportunity for young musicians to get up on stage, but also by inspiring others by showing them that anybody can play music, no matter what age they may be. Hyman says that he is thrilled with the musical development of Zuela, and that the results have exceeded his expectations. "The part of me that's a control freak is slightly terrified, but the part of me that's a creative artist is overjoyed," Hyman said. "I see the band getting bigger and better than my conception of it." He says playing with such young musicians is "very inspiring," and that it encourages him to break down the boundaries of his comfort zone. "It stretches me in every way," Hyman said.

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