

Mp3 New X Art Ensemble - New X: Trios & Duets



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Pushing, then steaming the envelope gave New X and these dozen players a reputation as the area's most bothersome variety band with a heady mix of classical, free jazz, folk blues, funk, rock, biting lyrics and an extremely alternative edge. 8 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Free Jazz, URBAN/R&B: Funk Details: New X: Trios Duets Billy X. Curmano's New X Art Ensemble featuring the Amazing Tess Toster Tones is a free form group known for odd instrumentation and experimentation. The CD, "New X: Trios Duets", was named for the New X penchant to subdivide as band members go on breaks or become otherwise unavailable. It's first track, "Sweet Suite", capitalizes on several possible incarnations of the band in a carefully orchestrated 23 minute improvisation. Curmano conducted the twelve players in and out of their various small units and back to the big band. They followed up the "Sweet Suite" with a classic blend of New X brand original "standards". The variety ranges from free jazz, folk blues, rock and funk - all with a healthy alternative edge - to the environmental plug: "Reduce, re-use, recycle or die". It's an honest effort with no overdubbing or cheap tricks. Years of weekly free jazz in an isolated farm house at Art Works USA and performances with a changing cast of characters set the tone for the two one-take recording sessions at Gilmore Creek Records. On Nov. 16, 2000 and April 7, 2001 New X was: Kevin Brady on bass guitar; Kelly Coyle: guitar; Billy X. Curmano: lead vocals, dulcimer, mbira and vibraphone; James B. Quick Degnan: trumpet, bass trumpet and fluglehorn; Andrew Foss: bass guitar; Pete Hansen: flute; D.L. Hunt: French horn, Fender Rhodes and bass guitar; Jeanie Martini: vocals extraordinaire; Scott Olson: theramin; John C. Paulson: soprano saxophone; Steve Smith: dijjiridu and tenor saxophone and Frank Utecht: drum kit. New X started simply as a frequent collaboration between Billy X. Curmano, an award winning performance artist, D.L. Hunt, a classical French horn musician and Steve Smith, a jazz influenced river-saxophone rat. The trio's diverse experiments in sound generation attracted a cadre of

"outside" players. Curmano has toured internationally as a soloist and been chosen as the "LA Weekly" performance "Pick of the Week" in Los Angeles. Reviewers have compared him and the New X Art Ensemble to Lionel Hampton, Eric Dolphy, Ornette Coleman and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. The Minneapolis weekly, "City Pages", placed them on their "A List". Collaborations on numerous original scores for film and video soundtracks led to the 2002 "Hampton Award for Excellence in Film Digital Media". The players on Trios Duets are involved in a wide range of individual projects. Some have been moving in and out of New X for years bringing their musical ideas and history to the group. Curmano has a solo effort, "Billy X: Solo Set" and two acoustic jazz recordings with John Pendergast, "Amanita" and "Doozy". John Paulson, soprano sax on "Vibratory Jam" and the recording engineer on "Trios Duets", fronts his own quartet with several exceptional releases, "Tower Blues", "Blues for Erin" and "Up Late". Kelly Coyle, Steve Smith, and Frank Utecht joined with Keith Boyles to form the "Endtime Quartet" and released the free jazz opus, "Sun Ray". The New X base at the eXperimental Art Research Terminal (XART) is a workshop and laboratory where most anything goes. It remains a haven to freely refine noise and musical ideas. Its intent is a refuge and open meeting point where no one is held in jeopardy for any notes played during the weekly sessions. Pushing, then steaming, the envelope gave New X a reputation as the region's most bothersome variety band. Weary of just bothering the locals, they took their restless nature and "art as life" tours into formal spaces from Los Angeles, New Orleans and Minneapolis to the informality of Mississippi River Islands, street corners and the kilns of Death Valley. New X was quickly hailed as Death Valley's most bothersome band. The New X attitude is a genuine respect for the past and the cross-cultural mix of melody and rhythm from far-off continents that became jazz in the freedom of the American melting pot. Their sound is more about vision and texture than virtuosity for its own sake. The players are not musical morticians embalming jazz, but new traditionalists. They shun stereotypes and abandon the crutches of keys, meters and charts to honor improvisation and an eclectic style. New X is best when performance, poetry and compositions segue into free form improvisation and back again in a sort of bastard jazz. Polyphonic tones battle and vie for prominence contrasted by sweet strains in a cultural clash, but always with respect and attention to individual voices and the overall mix.

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