

Mp3 Colin Owens - 20 Minutes Into The Future



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If jazz fusion had taken a left hand turn in pop in the seventies, "20 Minutes into the Future" would have fit in quite nicely. 12 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Funk, JAZZ: Jazz Fusion Details: this album was made over the course of five years. It started with some electronic songs I was working on with lyrics -- It was going to be the follow up to Hollywood, but Hollywood didn't do as well as I thought it would. It definitely had its problems. Although I was an adept keyboard player, I wasn't very experienced as a singer and I think it showed a bit. I still think I'd like to do some of the songs again. Soon after I started "20 Minutes" someone gave me this beautiful Rhodes Mark I keyboard and I started to fool around with it. It became the signature of the album. Every song has been touched by the electric piano and in most cases an organ sound from the computer or one of my other keyboards. My dad introduced me to a few players and had it in his head that I should start incorporating other musicians besides the two of us. Danny Underwood was the first guy to come in. He graciously agreed to do it, and without asking for anything in return. This trend would continue and I don't think anyone's ever talked about money, probably because they know there might never be any, but mostly because they play for the love of it. Anyway, Danny walked in with this gorgeous 5 string number and started laying down some grooves on songs I had partially written. I had gone to length to take a lot out to see what he would add. What I hadn't expected was the influence his playing would have on my playing. In fact, every musician who touched this album had something to teach me. The next person was J.O. Wharton, who just blew over everything I had. It was really difficult to have to cut all of that beautiful playing when it came to editing! A few weeks later, Nathan Felde came in with his Viola. Nathan and I had been working together in the design world for a while and I had never heard him play, although people had told me that he was also a good player. He came in, improved over a song and then proceeded to start going nuts with some atonal fast moving stuff, a lot of which ended up

in Todd Verow's upcoming film "Hooks to the Left." All throughout this, my dad and I were working out the material, writing songs, swapping lyrics and rewriting. He would come in and play, sometimes with one stringed instrument, sometimes with another, but his main axe was the Strat. That was and continues to be the guitar sound on almost everything. Then I started getting serious with my girlfriend who lived in London at the time and I decided to move out there. I nearly abandoned the album completely at that point because of the move and pretty much at the same time I got a contract to do design work in Italy. So I moved some of the studio to England and broke off some pieces and moved that to Italy. The first time I plugged in my (API for the geeks) preamps in Italy, I thought I had been careful about fuses and voltages and did all of my home work -- Only to see one of my pieces of equipment catch fire the moment I plugged it into the wall! Oh my! So I had half of my gear that worked and half of it that didn't. This greatly affected the way I wrote music. It was stripped down. It was lean. It was perfect for what was to come. My dad came over the time I lived in Italy and we worked on some stuff together in my little apartment -- The first time I ever recorded in a "garage" type set up in a long time. Everything I had been working on until London was done at Helen's Kitchen, the purpose-built studio in my house. He had even sent me a few CDs here and there for ideas that would later be incorporated. While I was learning this new language (some say I never did) I had a lot of time to be up in my head, kind of without language at all. I started to write songs (for the instrumental album called *The Daydream*) and then lyrics started coming to my head about what was going on in America. Then I learned that my girlfriend's hospital visit to remove a second ovarian tumour was found to have been cancerous. That was how the song *Poison* came to being. Both about the politics of America and about cancer. It seemed ridiculous that America was picking fights with entire nations so overtly when, here was this person I was close to fighting for her very life. What does a person in a hospital bed care about anything but the most basic things? Eating. Shitting. Waking up without pain. These are the things we should be thinking about. Not more efficient ways of killing, but more efficient ways of living. I continued to work on other songs, like *Fashion*, *Reason*, *Sarengeti*. I moved back to London to take care of her until she passed away and took a six month hiatus from this album. Instead, I concentrated on *Daydream*, which spoke directly to my experiences of traveling to the hospital. In London my dad came over twice and I had enough material for two albums. One became *The Daydream*. The other was to be 20 minutes. So they're both cut from the same fabric. You'll hear a lot of cross over from one to the other. I came back to the US last year in June and was immediately struck by how different I

felt. Everything about me had changed. Everything about Boston had changed. I mean, here were these new roads and tunnels and buildings. The streets looked wider. The cars were on the wrong side of the road. And of course I returned to a nation that was fighting a full-scale war on an unknown enemy. The first thing I when I got back was work on this full-time. My dad and I cracked on and that was when I met JO's cousin, Frank the flautist, for the first time. He added an even deeper dimension to what we were doing. I'm still trying to sort that one out! I had done a lot of vocals, without success. I recorded in professional recording studios in London, at Mike's place in Taunton (backing vocals made it to the final) and nothing was working out. I felt wooden behind the microphone. So I took the mic and stuck it in the same room as the computer. No isolation, no fancy equalization, just me and the microphone. It did the trick. I could do many takes and if I didn't like it I could come back later. No hiring another engineer. No worrying about when to stop the whole thing and rewind. The whole mixing was made easy by the fact that I had recently contacted an old friend from College, Dave Greenberg, who has a recording studio in tampa, and whose ears are like gold. I sent him acouple of mixes and he said everything sounded great, so I shipped himover the finals over the internet (a first for me) and he mastered them like a dream in no time at all. So here I was, recording an album over 5 years in 3 countries, working with someone 3,000 miles away and with a band that had never played together. that was until we played together at the Other Side cafe for the premier of the album. And that went really well. It's an entirely new sound and I'm excited to be the instigator amongst good players.

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