

Mp3 Tim Nelson - Mesh



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Tim Nelson's 'Mesh' was conceived as an installation piece for a gallery opening; early reviews have described the music, which ranges from delicate acoustic fingerstyle pieces to sweeping soundscapes as 'powerful' and 'cinematic'. 14 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Ambient, ELECTRONIC: Soundscapes Details:

Tim Nelson used to be an experimental avant-garde musician. Hardly anyone knew about it. Then he toured the country in an alternative rock band. Lots of people he didn't know would say hello to him by name when he went to the mall. Then he went back to the avant-garden. This confused the mall people, apparently. ***** On 'Mesh', Tim Nelson played acoustic guitars, cello, flutes (bansuri, Native American, silver boehm, suling, shakuhachi and recorder), Nellotron, cymbals, bongos, dumbek, djembe, chimes, bells, saron and kalimba, as well as some other things he's forgotten about...

***** In February 2006, Tim Nelson was interviewed for a future edition of Lightbulb magazine. The following consists of excerpts from that interview which deal specifically with 'Mesh': L: How did this CD come about? TN: It originally started out as an installation piece. I was asked to perform at a gallery opening at which a 30-year retrospective show of an art college's metalsmithing department was being featured. When I saw the rather intimate size of the gallery and the way it was jam-packed with glass jewelry cases, I began to doubt that there'd be a large enough space to set up my equipment, so I thought it might be more appropriate to do it as an installation. I'd been getting ready to record anyway, so I decided to use the opening as my deadline and got to work. Meanwhile, the event was reorganized around another venue. The downside is that there was no installation; the upside is that I finished the CD and here it is! L: What's that on the cover? TN: What do you think it is? L: Well, it's obviously a body part. I think. TN: Uh-huh. L: Is it...? (points) TN: No. That wouldn't be fit for a family publication, now, would it? L: It isn't? TN: No. It's nothing that's normally covered by a bathing suit. Well,

unless it's an antique Victorian bathing suit. L: Hmmmm.... TN: A wiseacre friend of mine told me he thought it was my armpit, but it's definitely not. L: Ahh... OK. I see that most of the titles have some connection with metalworking. TN: They all do, actually, but most of them have at least two meanings. Or at least two connotations, more accurately. L: You're known primarily as an electric guitarist, but there isn't much guitar on the CD. TN: Is that a bad thing? L: Oh, no, that's not what I mean. TN: It was a conscious decision to try and keep the flow of the installation constant. It was going to be multi-channel with the various tracks looping simultaneously in different parts of the gallery, in different phase, so that as you walked through, the mix would change. But it's funny, at one point in the recording process I was getting frustrated with trying to work exclusively with pieces that had an intentionally similar texture to them, with all the mellotron washes over metallic percussion. My girlfriend had been lobbying me to record some acoustic fingerstyle pieces, which I was resisting because I didn't want the album to start sounding like Windham Hill, y'know? So one day I was working with wind chimes and whatnot, and feeling like it was going nowhere, so I took her parlor guitar down off the wall and recorded two acoustic pieces with a condenser mic. I'm glad I did; I've had a lot of positive reaction to them, and by putting them in the second position and the second-to-last spot, they sort of frame the album nicely. L: Those would be 'tungsten' and 'amalgam'. TN: Right. The other guitar track is 'gauss', which is an e-bowed acoustic with a piezo on it, run through my pedalboard. That's the closest an electric guitar makes it to this CD, although I did play a fretless Jazz Bass in a couple of spots. And there's a pickup on the cello as well. There was going to be a pedal steel piece on there as well, called 'steel' in keeping with the metallurgical theme, but it didn't make the cut. L: Will you be performing these pieces live? TN: Well, not really. I'm more into improvisation than a fixed repertoire. But since most of these pieces were recorded live anyway, I can do something with a very similar texture, should I choose to. L: Wait. You're saying that most of these pieces were live? TN: Not in the sense that there was an audience, but, yes, there's a lot of real-time stuff on there. L: They sound very full, as if you did a lot of multi-tracking. TN: I sometimes like to use my old analog eight track, a 488 that I think pretty much nobody uses anymore besides me and the Twin Atlas, to build layered cello or flute parts, as they start to sound very mellotronish, but no, for the most part on 'Mesh' I played my parts in real time into digital looping devices, and then edited later. It's funny, though; I like to use real flutes and cellos next to mellotron flutes and cellos, so often you can't really be sure which you're hearing. L: I noticed you mentioned in the liner notes about this being an instrumental album,

because certain instruments sound like human voices. TN: Right. On one track, 'damascus', the cello sounds that way, and on another, 'wrought', a shakuhachi part sounds eerily like a vocal. L: It does, very much. The eighth track, 'vermeil', has a Jon Hassell feel to it. TN: I take that as a compliment; I like Hassell. That's what I get for playing flute through a pitch shifter. Who else do you hear on here? L: Well, I'm not saying it's derivative... TN: I didn't think you were, but it's always interesting to hear who people think I sound like. L: Well... There's one track that reminds me a lot of Brian Eno, with what sounds like maybe a piece of metal on a flagpole rope clanging in a light breeze... It's sort of like some of the cuts from 'On Land', but with a more prominent melodic content. TN: That's 'ore'. I think the sound you're hearing is a slowed-down windchime. L: The last piece, 'gilt' reminds me a bit of a bootleg tape I used to have of Pink Floyd doing Dark Side live about a year before the album was actually recorded. Some of the songs were very different, and there was a long, improvised organ solo... TN: I think I've heard that one! I'm relieved that I like every artist you've compared me to... *****

Miscellaneous Reviews and Comments: "Tim Nelson makes strangely wonderful music on wonderfully strange instruments!" - Sean Byrne (The Twin Atlas) "Tim Nelson is one of the most impressive and creative musicians I've run across in my travels. He is ceaselessly inventive and has no fear of stepping outside of the box to create something that is brand new and cutting edge... He also has a great knack for innovative electronic and physical techniques to create an astonishing arsenal of sounds for both his artistic projects and his professional studio work." - Rick Walker (producer/composer/multi-instrumentalist) "Tim Nelson is one of the lucky few who truly sees music in a different light, using a myriad of instrumentation to accurately interpret each song's detailed textures and contours, as a photographer would use different lenses to capture the tiniest details. In that regard, Nelson's work is a macro lens that captures the nectar on a bee's legs after pollination." - Marty England (Pondering Judd) "Tim uses the entire world for his sonic palette. Not just the musical styles but the very musical instruments themselves. His is ambient music that is interesting and moving, rather than a backdrop for something more important, and contains no dairy products whatsoever. From Akron to Arabia, Africa to Ankor Wat, his music is sometimes synthesis and other times distillate--always a journey. Often it is his very own unique aural species, familiar yet exotic, smooth on the outside and dynamically complex within. Tim knows what he is doing and does it with enthusiasm, open-mindedness, and an ongoing thirst for new sounds and combinations thereof... Yikes." - Butch Heilshorn (5 Balls of Power, Jim Jones the Guyanas, BobHouse,

Hemicuda, Moonking, PlayHard Records)

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