

Mp3 Astral Project - Big Shot



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"Big Shot", the band's first album in three years, showcases Astral Project's unique mix of funky street rhythms, exotic melodies and brilliant improvisation as never before. 11 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Traditional Jazz Combo, JAZZ: Acid Jazz Details: ASTRAL PROJECT Since 1978, Astral Project has been New Orleans' most exciting, inventive and respected modern jazz group. It's a co-op band comprised of world-class improvisers, hailed by fans and critics around the world. Down Beat calls Astral Project "one of the most distinctive and cohesive groups in jazz." Jazz Times calls Astral Project "one of the more adventurous working units in modern jazz today." Big Shot, the band's first album in three years, showcases Astral Project's unique mix of funky street rhythms, exotic melodies and brilliant improvisation as never before. From the inside-out groove of the title track to the collective improvisation of Pandemonium, the record displays the band's peerless composing and performing skills. Saxophonist Tony Dagradi, a devoted student of Eastern philosophy, coined the band name as a reflection of the group's quest for a higher plane of artistry. As anyone who has seen the band in concert knows, every performance finds the band members reaching for the stars. These veteran musicians, known as tops on their instruments in jazz-rich New Orleans, each with many album credits as leaders and sidemen, bring a wealth of diverse experience to the bandstand. Which is why the group journeys into so many different musical spheres. True to the original spirit of jazz, Astral Project creates real tunes and memorable melodies while giving the musicians freedom to incorporate influences from all sources. The group shifts direction like a flock of birds in flight with an ease so uncanny it seems to verge on telepathy. It's music that can come only from special individuals who have spent decades improvising together. Leading Astral Project is Tony Dagradi performing on both tenor and soprano saxophones. With his stunning technique and singular tone, he brings emotional urgency to each solo. Over the years he has appeared with many

of New Orleans' most notable musicians, including Ellis Marsalis, James Black, Allen Toussaint, The Meters, Dr. John and Professor Longhair. In addition to his local activities, he has worked with Bobby McFerrin, Nat Adderley, Donald Byrd and Norman Connors. He also spent five years as featured soloist with the Carla Bley Band, during which time he toured Europe, Japan and North America. Tony can be heard on many recordings. His most recent solo efforts include "Parading" (Mirliton Records), "Dreams of Love" (Rounder), and "Live at the Columns" (Turnipseed). Steve Masakowski has long been regarded as one of the most awe-inspiring guitarists and composers in contemporary music. He plays unique seven-string guitars of his own design that are hand-made by New Orleans luthier Sal Giardina. Steve is a major voice whose extraordinary musicality has been welcomed in concert with such jazz greats as Woody Shaw, Carl Fontana, Dave Liebman, Jimmy Smith, Sam Rivers and, most recently, Dianne Reeves, Bennie Wallace and Rick Margitza. Among the awards and honors that he has garnered are two National Endowment For The Arts fellowships, several grants from The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation and one from the Louisiana Division of The Arts. Steve's own recordings include: "What It Was" (Blue Note), "Direct AXEcess" (Blue Note), "Mars" (Nebula), "Friends" (Nebula), "For Joe" (Compass) and Moon and Sand. His dynamic solo work can also be heard on recordings by Reeves, Mose Allison, Alvin "Red" Tyler and Margitza. James Singleton is a conduit of pure energy who, to a large degree, defines the sound of Astral Project. His solid rhythmic concept and harmonic sense are the foundation of this innovative group's improvisational strength. James has performed in concert with such modern jazz musicians as John Abercrombie, John Scofield, Art Baron, Ellis Marsalis, Earl Turbinton and Eddie Harris. He has appeared with swing and traditional greats Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown, Lionel Hampton, Arnette Cobb and Banu Gibson. His extensive recording credits include work with Chet Baker, Alvin "Red" Tyler, James Booker, Charlie Rich and Zachary Richard. James produced the Astral Project album "Elevado". He is also leader of the experimental group 3 Now 4, which has released a self-titled debut and the new "Book of Spells" (G.E.S.). In his very personal approach to percussion, master drummer John Vidacovich combines elements of New Orleans' traditional rhythms with free techniques and mainstream sensibilities. He is at once a brilliant soloist and a highly sensitive accompanist with the ability to detect and quickly enhance even the most subtle change of direction. His command of dynamics, distinctive melodic accents and effervescent swing have brought him international recognition as the quintessential modern New Orleans drummer. His unique style and conviction has led to

performances with jazz masters Joe Henderson, Donald Byrd, Kenny Baron, Eddie Harris, Nat Adderley, Joe Williams, Ray Anderson and Bennie Wallace, plus work with such Southern legends as Professor Longhair, James Booker and Mose Allison. Most recently, John has toured with the young guitarist Charlie Hunter. John's albums as a leader include "Banks Street" and "Mystery Street" (both Chebasco), and his new solo album, "Vidacovich."

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