

## Mp3 Jamie Begian Big Band - Trance



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Very modern music for jazz orchestra. Unique compositions with an amazing clarity of vision/concept. Lots of energy, electric guitar and a breadth of moods. 8 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Big Band, JAZZ: Free Jazz

Details: TRANCE (notes by Jim McNeely) The Jamie Begian Big Band It's inspiring to see the evolution of the big band format into the rich fabric of the modern-day jazz orchestra scene, there are probably more big bands, big jazz bands, than ever before. True, many of these bands receive support from cultural institutions, schools, universities, and the like. But there are also an amazing number of "free lance" bands that are true labors of love. Usually founded and led by one person, hardly any other institution demands so much time and effort while draining resources left and right. If you have the vision, then you write the music; you copy the parts; you call the players; you hire the rehearsal hall; you book the gigs; you send out the flyers. And then when you decide to record: it's on you, you, you, and you. Face it: you have to be a little crazy to start your own big band! Enter Jamie Begian. Jamie has all of these wonderful sounds and ideas flying around his imagination. And for him the inevitable time has come. To form a band that expresses his vision of big band music, with soloists and ensemble players of his own choosing. A band that becomes the instrument through which he expresses his compositional voice. I've known Jamie for a number of years, through our mutual association with the BMI Jazz Composers' Workshop, which is an ongoing meeting of emerging jazz composers in New York City. I first heard a couple of the album's pieces in the workshop reading sessions, and was struck immediately by their honest individuality, their economy and cohesion, their freshness. His voice has always been a little different. True, he knows the way that big band music is "supposed" to sound, and you'll hear some of that in this recording. But he also imagines a lot of other possibilities for a band: different forms, different kinds of backgrounds, different shapes and colors. And he's not afraid to express them. I like that! This album isn't a mere

collection of "charts". Each piece is a short story, with plot and characters. In short, Trance encompasses the rich and varied vision of large ensemble jazz according to Jamie Began. Oops! begins normally enough, as a truncated blues. But then a great tutti grows, adding a few players at a time, leading into a group blowout. After the peak, Jamie cues each player, one by one, out of the group. At the end piano and drums tie things up with a quote of the piece's first phrase. The title piece, Trance, demonstrates some of Jamie's vision of the role of the guitar in the modern big band. It's also our first encounter with Bruce Arnold, here on processed guitar. Jamie asked him to "make it sound like the world was exploding", and Bruce takes no prisoners! Trance also marks the album's first appearance by the Wurlitzer electric piano (mine is long gone, but I still have the soldering iron I used to tune it!). It has a little more bite than the Fender-Rhodes, and plays a large role in this CD. Then there's the 7/4 journey into Fuzzy Math. This piece was the winning entry in the BMI Jazz Composers' Workshop/Charlie Parker competition for 2001. It's a thoughtful mixture of composed elements and open blowing for John O'Gallagher on alto saxophone and Matt Shulman on trumpet. This "thoughtful mixture" is a trademark of Jamie's writing. There's never a solo "just to have a solo". MarcySong is the most lyrical offering of the set. Jamie passes the melody around from solo trombone to other solo and group voices. After solos from Marc McDonald and Roberta Pickett the ensemble builds, re-working the first bar of the melody over a pulsing pedal. Jamie then teases us with just a hint of the opening trombone theme. Finally there's Kablooiie. Jamie first teases us (again, the teasing!) with 4 measures of "standard issue" saxophone soli, but immediately gets into other territory, throwing different motives around and leading into a powerful melody, all held together by the glue of a repeated rhythmic figure. Solos lead to "almost a shout chorus". The rhythmic figure ends the piece and the CD. Kablooiie! With Trance, Jamie Began makes his opening move into the realm of today's creative big band composers and bandleaders. You'll hear why the minute you start listening to this CD. I can only hope that there is more to come. Jim McNeely October 2002

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